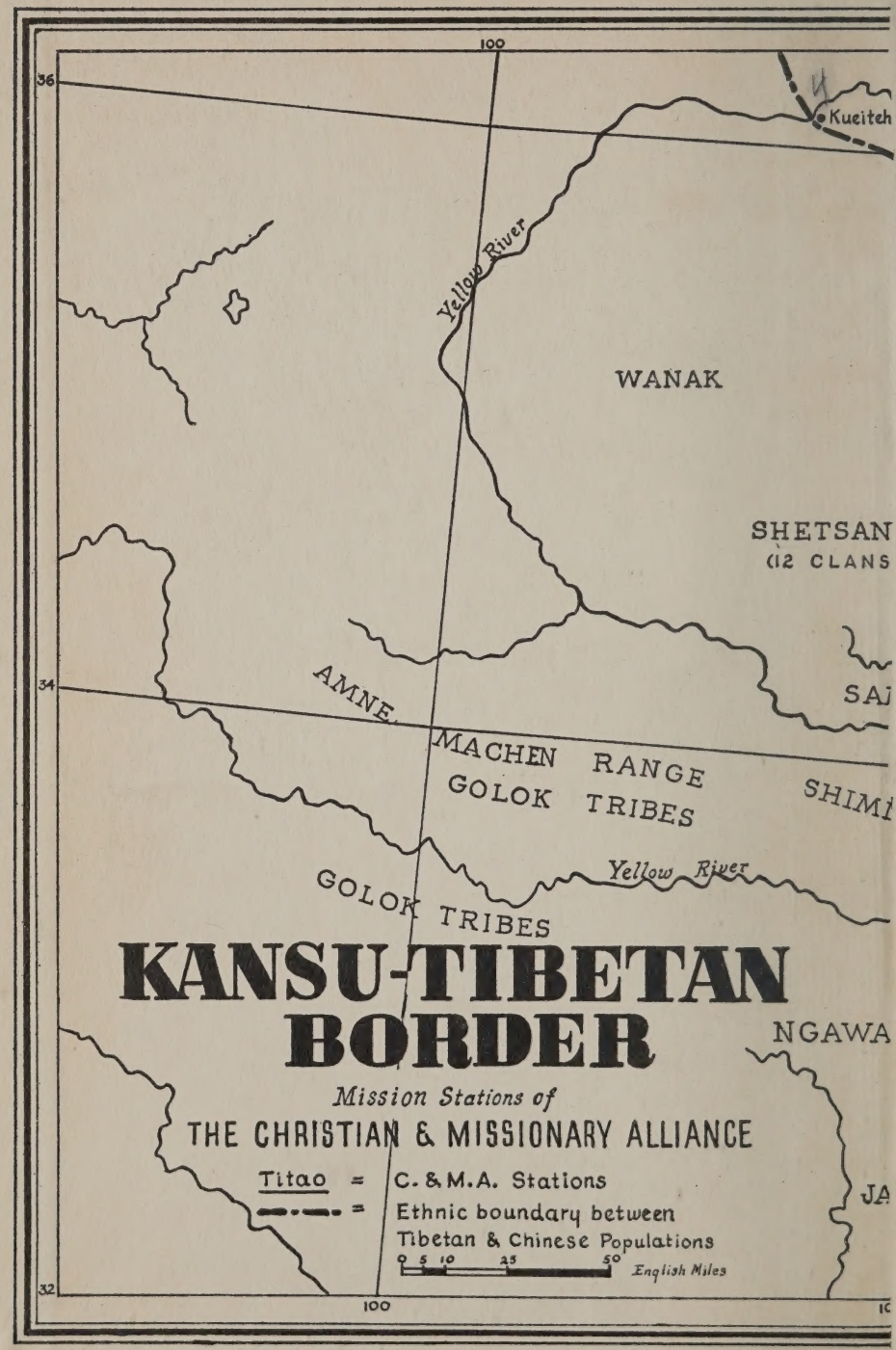
GATEWAY TO TIBET

ROBERT B. EKVALL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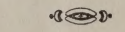

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Mrs. Charles Henry Greenleaf

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Gateway to Tibet

LABRANG, TIBET

The Labrang monastery may be seen in the upper left corner of this photograph; the trading village in the upper right; and the mission quarters of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in the lower left.

GATEWAY TO TIBET

The Kansu-Tibetan Border

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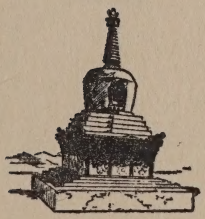
By

ROBERT B. EKVALL, B.A., F.R.G.S.

Introduction

REV. WILLIAM CHRISTIE



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The mark of *vibrant faith*

(Printed in the United States of America.)

IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE

This book is dedicated to the memory of those who laid down their lives in missionary service on the Kansu-Tibetan Border.

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"And You—?"

INTRODUCTION

IN RESPONSE to the request of the author, I have consented to write an Introduction to this book. One consideration which has moved me to do so is the fact that I was privileged in the early years of the Mission to pioneer with the author's noble father among the Chinese cities and Tibetan lamaseries, where in later years mission stations were established. Another reason for writing this Introduction is that I have known the author all his life and cherish deep admiration for him. No one is better fitted than he to write the history of the Alliance Mission on the Kan-sù-Tibetan marches.

The territory comprising the mission field described in this book lies approximately 101 degrees and 105 degrees east longitude and 33 degrees and 36 degrees north latitude. The aspect of the country is for the most part very mountainous with the altitude varying from 6,000 to 12,000 feet above sea level, and the climate is good, though the winters are long. Horseback is the most common, as it is the fastest, mode of transportation. There live within this area a population of 3,500,000 human beings, whose occupation is chiefly that of the farmer or the shepherd. A large percentage of Tibetan men are priests who live mostly in lamaseries, and these inhabitants are the attraction of the missionary. He is there to tell them of the love of God in Christ Jesus which has provided for them a present and an eternal salvation.

This book covers a period of forty-one years, and represents the faithful and sacrificial work of more than sixty missionaries, whose service varied from one

to forty years' duration. *Gateway to Tibet* is a succinct history of that mission field. The beginnings of the work are accurately described and the development of its various phases carefully traced, emphasis ever being placed upon the work of the Lord. The evolution of the indigenous Church is stressed, and reverses as well as successes are truthfully recorded. Keen discernment of the weaknesses of this Mission is evinced, but due appreciation is also shown for the strong and abiding blessing which characterizes its work. Important historical events and their effect upon the Church and Mission are noted.

The book is fitly named *Gateway to Tibet,* for the geographical area of this mission field is largely that watered by the many tributaries which flow into the Yellow River from the South, beginning with the Tao River which enters it a few miles west of Lanchow, the capital of Kansu. Following some of these streams to their source the traveler would find himself among the Tibetan nomads.

The scenery in many parts of this field is unsurpassed anywhere in the world. In the lower courses of the streams are found yawning gorges, formed by the action of water issuing from the springs and the melting snow and ice of the high Tibetan plateau. These waters find an outlet by cutting through the mountains which form the rim of the plateau.

The region is fascinating not only because of its beautiful natural scenery, but also from an anthropological point of view. Herein are found living in contiguous areas Chinese, Tibetans, Mongols, Salars, and aborigines. Each race speaks its own language with varying dialects. Through the medium of one or the other language these races hold intercourse with one

another chiefly for the purpose of trade or barter. Though there occurs some intermarriage among them yet they remain quite distinct one from the other. This is especially true of the Tibetans and Mongols. Because of the existing characteristic racial distinctions and the marked differences of social habits, manners, and customs, the missionary approach is rendered complicated and difficult. This problem has been partly solved by assigning some missionaries to work among Chinese, some among Tibetans, and others among the Moslem Salars.

Among the inhabitants of this mission field there are devotees of many different religions. Among the Chinese is found devotion to Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, and a number of occult and esoteric cults. Among the Tibetans are found votaries of Lamaism (the yellow caps or northern Buddhism) of the red caps (another and older sect of Buddhism), of sorcery and the ancient Bon religion. Among the Moslems exists a number of sects of Mohammedanism, some of which hold bitter hatred for one another. The impact of these religions upon each other has produced a situation which creates a difficult problem for the missionary.

Normal missionary work on this field has often been interrupted by various political upheavals as the following enumeration will show. Within the period of time covered by this narrative there have occurred two Mohammedan rebellions, the Boxer rebellion, the great revolution of 1911-1912, the White Wolf raids, the civil war of 1925-1927, the Red invasion of Kansu, and a number of local disturbances. Because of these upheavals, the entire missionary force had to be evacu-

ated from the field on four different occasions, thrice to the coast and once to the provincial capital.

Had space permitted, the author could have recounted many thrilling experiences of his own and of his fellow missionaries. But these have been sacrificed for the more important duty of recording the movings of the Spirit of God and the working of the Lord in and through the missionary force and the national Christian leaders. It is a marvel of the mercy, grace, and power of God that the Mission and the Church in that area have survived and continue to persist in pioneering, evangelizing, and Bible teaching. May the reading of this book stir the reader to the depths, and cause such a response in prayer, faith, and giving that the vast remaining task may proceed until it is finished.

WILLIAM CHRISTIE.

PART I

BEGINNINGS

Every part is essential to the well-rounded whole. But most of all that which tells of beginnings gives enlightment and comprehension to the record of all which follows, for in the beginnings of any venture, trifling though they may seem, are the foreshadowings of the end. The seed contains within itself all that grows, flowers, and bears fruit. And that fruit will be but the consummation of that which was in embryo within the seed itself. So, too, the plantings of faith bring forth faith to the glory of His Name.

Thus the vision of a people banded together to carry the Gospel to Tibet, and the ventures of the pioneers they sent to the Sino-Tibetan marches in far off western China, contained in embryo the fulfillment and accomplishment God has vouchsafed to The Christian and Missionary Alliance on those borders, making a once closed land into a signal opportunity in this our day that the task may be finished. For as W. E. Blackstone said, "It may be that God is keeping back that one little place—Tibet—to be the last land reached with the Gospel before the Lord returns."

PART I

BEGINNINGS

First Station—Taochow Old City
Field Conditions
First Move into Tibetan Country
Minchow Among the Chinese
Visit to Labrang
Pao-an Venture
Evacuation

Chapter I

THE beginnings of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission lie far back in Alliance history, even to a time before the Alliance had come into being, when under the leadership of Dr. Simpson the second Old Orchard Convention was held during the summer of 1886. None of those gathered amid the pines of Old Orchard on that beautiful Sabbath morning knew specifically of such a place as the Kansu-Tibetan marches, but the attention of those many earnest missionary-minded people was directed to Tibet in the course of a great missionary sermon preached by Mr. W. E. Blackstone. And from that sermon broken snatches creep into the history of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission for the accumulative appeal of such phrases as "Tibet, the last land to be opened to the Gospel," "Tibet—the last land—before the Lord returns," "to send a missionary to Tibet and keep him there" was the pivotal point God used when He swung into being and action the entire Alliance missionary movement.

Yet it was almost ten years later ere the first Alliance missionaries reached the borders of that far-away and inaccessible land. Today the Alliance missionary movement includes both India and China—the two great divisions of heathenism that enclose within their joined mass mysterious Tibet—that land which is the heart of Asia, where two great Asiatic cultures meet and mingle. Yet that heart has always been singularly impervious to the Gospel. For a time locating a mission on the Indian border and the sending of a mission to Nepal were both mooted but two young men of the band of missionaries that sailed for China in 1892 had

heard of Taochow Old City on the Kansu-Tibetan Border. Under God's providence their vision and zeal was the deciding factor; they were set apart for the work and sent to Peking to study Tibetan at the lama temple.

As soon as possible they ventured the breadth of China seeking the border land of Tibet. No great railway lines cut the distance in half. No modernized motor roads swiftly gathered up the laggard miles, and the roar of the Eurasia passenger planes was a dream as yet undreamt. By cart and pack-train they slowly crawled across the teeming face of eastern Asia, gradually losing contact with the outside world. The telegraph poles were early left behind and then one day they were beyond the network of the Imperial Post. Here and there they found a mission station but as they went westward the report even of such places was lost and yet they had not come to the borders of Tibet. The sing-song tones of Chinese still echoed in their ears and the people all around were the sons of Han.

So they traveled and the landscape climbed before them—a slowly heaving swell to merge into the great central plateau. The alluvial plains of the coastal regions were left behind and the loess upland broke into hills and purple mountains that are the frayed ends of great barrier ranges. And in a land of hills and valleys where mighty forest-clad mountains fringe the western and southern horizon they finally, in the spring of 1895, came to the border city of Taochow Old City.

It was the last outpost of Chinese penetration into this part of northeast Tibet, and though altogether Chinese and Mohammedan in population, had something Tibetan in its appearance. The great fortress-like, two-storied, flat-roofed houses owed their design

to the Tibetan tradition of building for defense, and their timbers to the great Tibetan forests along the upper part of the Tao River. And above the flat roofs stretched the castellated line of the Chinese city wall and the pinnacled minaret of the Moslem prayer tower together with the curving sweep of temple roofs that dominated the city skyline.

The people of Taochow Old City, whether Chinese or Moslem, accepted the strangers with a degree of tolerance then rather rare in inland China. The Moslems, feeling themselves to be somewhat of aliens in the land and protagonists of monotheism among the idolaters, welcomed the missionaries as fellow-strangers and nonworshipers of idols. And the Chinese of the place, from long contact with foreign cultures and races, Moslem and Tibetan, had a broader tolerance of strange worship and outlandish habits of life.

The crowds that came to see the foreign devils in the rented inn just inside the south gate of the city, though driven by the same insistent curiosity, were on the whole more friendly than most inland crowds, and in a very short time the missionaries found a welcome in the homes and confidence of the people. And in Taochow Old City, such a welcome and the hospitality of the homes, while retaining the niceties and manner of the best Chinese tradition, had yet a touch of the more robust ideal of Tibetan hospitality. Thus from the very beginning of the missionary occupation of Taochow Old City the missionaries were given a high position in the public regard. This was well-earned and deserved, for those pioneers were men of unusual ability and character, in word and deed winning a half unwilling respect from the bitterest opponents of the Gospel.

But the unique fact that made this station different from all Alliance mission stations in China at that time —whether the first tentative advance in Kwang-si, the outposts of endeavor on the borders of Mongolia, or the precarious foothold in hostile Hunan—was that here for the first time Alliance missionaries were on the borders of Tibet. The Tibetan province of Amdo was within sight. The wind that swirled through the streets of Taochow Old City, driving the winter dust in choking clouds, came from the Tibetan mountains, bleak and lone on the northern horizon. The caravan trails of the Tibetan trade notched the passes in the near-by western hills, and the lumber that made it a city of great, well-built houses with wooden floors and sturdy timbers, came from Tibetan forests that showed like dark shadows on the foothills of the southern mountains. Here, too, Tibetan was no longer a matter of theoretical sounds only partly apprehended through the medium of letters in the pages of Jaeschke's Grammer, with its bewildering approximation of sounds, but had become the language of trade and gossip, for all day long the Tibetans surged through the streets of Taochow Old City.

None lived in the city, but all day men and women from near-by Tibetan and half-Tibetan villages filled the streets and pursued their humble trafficking, dealing in charcoal, firewood and fodder. Trading done, eager to see some new sight, they wandered into the courtyard of the mission compound, timidly accepting books from the newcomers and bringing the first sound of spoken Tibetan to Alliance missionaries. In the town at night parties of traders, travelers, pilgrims, and casual guests stayed wherever they could find shelter and a welcome. Indeed often, with the out-of-

Robert B. Ekvall

The author of this book, though educated in the United States, was born in Minchow, Kansu, of missionary parents. Both his father and uncle were pioneers in the West China Field. He has become recognized as an authority on things Tibetan, and is one of the most intrepid travelers among pioneer missionaries.

doors man's true hardihood, they asked only for a welcome, bivouacking in the open with cheerful indifference to the weather.

In a city where Chinese culture and learning, Moslem keenness and trading ability, and Tibetan wildness, were all mingled, this threefold diversity was the prophetic forecast of the threefold development of the work of the future. And here missionaries from the heart of Dr. Simpson's work, the Gospel Tabernacle of New York, opened the first station of the Kansu-Tibetan Mission of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. In Chinese temples, incense smoke and the sound of worship to idols that hid their grotesqueness in the inner gloom of recessed halls, mingled with the tinkle of wind-rung temple bells. From the pinnacled mosque the Moslem call to prayer would bring a pause in the busy trade of the shops and market place, while through it all wandered the Tibetan bonzes and laymen counting their beads, spinning prayer-wheels, with the mutter of a vague hopeless prayer upon their lips. And the prayer they said was *O-ma-ni-pad-me-hum* (O the jewel in the lotus). But in both Chinese and Tibetan another prayer came to stay and echo in that city, another faith came to challenge the entrenched might of those ancient creeds, and above the names of Confucius, Mohammed, or Gautama the Enlightened One, one name in praise and prayer was lifted high—the name of Jesus.

Chapter II

THE field of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission on the far northwestern frontier of China and the northeastern border of Tibet is very largely located within the basin and along the course of the Tao River. In the early history of the Mission it was entirely so, and thus much of mission history has to do with what took place in the Tao River Valley. The source of this swiftly flowing and turbulent stream is in the midst of a cirque of limestone peaks quite far up on the Tibetan plateau. There the outlet from a glacial lake and the flow of scores of mountain springs within a few miles combine to form a fair-sized stream that for some distance meanders northward through the grassland, until turning southward it cuts deeper and deeper into the rough terrain of the farming country of the Tibetans. A short distance from Taochow Old City it emerges from Tibetan country to form the border between Chinese and Tibetan territory, and later enters Chinese country not far from Minchow. At Minchow it again turns northward and by a series of awesome gorges cuts its way through the Peh Ling and finds its way through the loess country of the Titao district to where it unites with the Yellow River not far from Lanchow.

The first mission stations were all in the main valley of this river or within its basin, Taochow Old City being but five miles away from its banks, and Minchow being right in the main valley. It is much too swift for navigation in any way but by raft, and even timber rafts have to be broken up at various points in its course. But on a number of occasions when in foam-

flecked spate it has proven an effective barrier behind which missionaries have escaped the violence which followed along one or the other bank but was not able to cross.

Later missionary activity in Chinese country spread out from the line of its course both eastward and westward, and still more recently missionary advance in Tibetan country has moved out of the drainage basin of the Tao, placing stations within the drainage area of the Yellow River and at the source and along the course of the White Dragon River. But the history of the Mission has flowed most closely beside the waters of this stream that, crystal clear, is thick with globular ice in winter, giving rise to the Chinese proverb, "The Tao flows pearls," but muddy and foam-flecked during the summer rains.

The entire field is sharply divided into two distinct areas by the Peh Ling mountains that like a broken rocky wall lie at right angles to the lower course of the Tao. North of this barrier range, which is in itself the first abrupt step of the Tibetan plateau, the country is but a somewhat broken sharply-eroded swell of the great loess blanket of North China.

This formation of fine dust-like white earth has a vertical cleavage and under the ravages of erosion breaks into fantastic canyons and sinkholes among the carefully terraced fields. In the winter time this region which is largely devoid of vegetation seems as barren as a desert, but with the coming of spring the lifeless fields suddenly become green with the promise of harvest, for given sufficient rainfall the loess is of astonishing fertility, unworn from generation to generation. It is a region of mountains and valleys, but the mountains or hills are terraced to the very tops, and the val-

ley bottoms are filled with the carefully maintained checkerboard pattern of the ancestral fields, the only irregularity being the burying grounds of present and past generations. The villages, except when the smoke from house and bed fires hangs over them, are almost invisible from any distance, for the earthen walls and roofs are such a part of the landscape, at one with embankment and canyon walls that are far more architectural in outline.

The greater portion of the Chinese field is found in this "white earth" region, the three stations of Kong Chang, Titao, and Hochow being spaced from east to west at equal intervals of about seventy miles and all about equidistant from the northern slope of the Peh Ling. Still farther west of Hochow is the outstation of Hsuinhua among the Salar Moslems.

The people of this "north of the mountains" country are mostly Chinese or Moslem though a few isolated Tibetan villages are found in the extreme west. In Kong Chang facial peculiarities and idiosyncracies of speech and dialect lead one to suspect a strong aboriginal strain, and in Hochow the presence of Moslems for centuries has had a strong influence on the Chinese of the district, but in Titao the people are characteristically and unalterably Chinese in every respect. Almost within the shadow of wooded mountains and wild varied scenery this loess region is bare and ugly yet with a peculiar fascination of its own. But to the natives it is the "blessed land," for a great variety of grains, fruits, and vegetables are produced, no part of the region being over eight thousand feet above sea level and much of it being considerably less.

When we cross the rocky passes and come beyond the wooded slopes and scenic canyons of the Peh Ling

to the southern part of the field, in a land where mountains and forests seem to furnish an ideal background, in singular contrast to the "blessed land," we find a pinched and hungry manner of life. Large timbered houses mock their own magnificance with ill-concealed squalor, and forested slopes that riot in October cannot make stony fields bear more than meagre crops before the early frosts. The fertile and productive loess is only found in isolated pockets or basins, and because of the altitude only the barley crop is secure.

A somewhat stunted race, goitered and rheumatic, reap the results of shiftless farming. The eastern portion of the district south of the mountains is largely Chinese. The stations of Taochow Old City, Taochow New City, and Minchow are all among the Chinese, but in the western portion Tibetan country extends in a great high plateau right up to the Peh Ling. Among the fastnesses of that range there also remain scattered little-known communities of aboriginal peoples, some of whom still speak obscure tribal languages, and even the Chinese people of Taochow and Minchow, many of them the descendants of the soldier colonists of the past, show the admixture of Tibetan and tribal strains.

For the true Chinese this region is a land of scarcity, but the European finds compensations for the lack of the produce from the gardens and orchards of the "blessed land," for beef and mutton are plentiful, milk is to be found, and butter—much of it of doubtful freshness—is to be had. The early missionary pioneers coming first to the land south of the mountains found such animal products a welcome addition to the food supply of Chinese life, and minimizing for a time the effects of an altitude eight thousand feet and up-

ward, proclaimed Kansu the land flowing with milk and honey.

The history of the field is lost in the mists of earliest Chinese history. In the loess plateau of the Titao-Hochow area polychrome pottery belonging to the pioneers of the Chinese migration into the basin of the Yellow River is to be found in the burial and kitchen sites that have been preserved in the loess for over four thousand years. Such sites are recurrently uncovered following the action of erosion, and a very complete record of life as lived at the very dawn of Chinese history has been recovered. The pottery and culture of these sites have been very definitely linked to similar finds in a chain of localities across the heart of Central Asia and to a source area in the Euphrates Valley.

By the beginning of the Christian era such cities as Titao and Hochow had already a clear record of events, and the bronze artifacts in the tombs of the time of the Han dynasty are clearly linked with local records and the names of families continuative to the present time. The history of the southern half of the field bordering on Tibet is more recent, eventful records of military outposts on the borders of the wild, turbulent tribes which are the pet aversion of Chinese history. But with the time of the Mongol dynasty in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, a great frontier wall not far from Taochow Old City was erected as a boundary, and the now ruined city of Yangba occupied a key position at its southern extremity on the Tibetan side of the Tao River. It was in those times that Marco Polo visited the general region to record his interesting and accurate observations of the land and its people.

Sometime between those times and the present there also occurred a migration of Tibetan peoples from Central Tibet who came to the province of Amdo. They pushed their way among earlier Tibetan and Mongol tribes, and dispossessing both Chinese and Tibetans, occupied the Te-bu and Chone part of the border land.

The beginning of modern history finds the provinces of Kansu on the Chinese side and Amdo on the Tibetan side under imperial favor and of considerable renown. Then some seventy years ago the great Mohammedan rebellion during the reign of the Emperor Tung Chih took place. For fifteen years the war of extermination between the Chinese and the followers of the Prophet went on. The tales of that period are unbelievable. For years the regular planting of crops and reaping of harvests was discontinued. Cannibalism became not a mere incidental horror but the rule of life and human beings were hunted by the strong with all the tricks of the chase—dogs and all—to fill the pot that some might survive. The population of the province was reduced from fifteen million to three million, and when finally peace came as an alternative of mutual extinction, Kansu was a land of deserted villages and untilled fields. To this day many of those untilled fields make a mark of emptiness in the fruitful pattern of Chinese husbandry—an unhealed wound on the face of the land.

But that rebellion has also left a scar on the mind and thinking of the Kansu Chinese. All other fears are dwarfed by the fear of a Mohammedan rebellion and all other news pales into insignificance when the word is whispered *"Huei-huei fan lao"* (the Mohammedans have rebelled). Fear has bred cruelty and hate which in turn have spawned rebellion itself. Each

generation has sowed the seeds of a new crop that has been reaped at the end of thirty years with terrible regularity, as the sons experience a new rebellion different only in time from the one their fathers went through. All of Chinese life in Kansu and all missionary work takes place with this fear and this sequence of cause and effect as the back drop.

Thus in the timing of events it is of peculiar significance that the first missionaries of The Christian and Missionary Alliance came to the Kansu-Tibetan Border just as a Mohammedan rebellion had broken out, and made Taochow Old City a mission station just as the greater portion of the province had become a battle ground between the uncertain armies and levies of the decadent imperial government and the rebellious bloodthirsty Moslem irregulars.

Chapter III

BECAUSE of their wealth and business success, the Moslems of Taochow Old City had everything to lose and little to gain by joining in the rebellion, so in spite of the machinations of a few of the wilder spirits, the Mohammedans of the region did not rise. The leaders united with the Chinese gentry to preserve order and peace in the community, and by prompt remittance of funds and provisions, to keep any government armies from coming to "rescue" the place, as the undisciplined soldiery were to be dreaded only one degree less than the wildest rebels. In fact, once when a certain column had already reached Charki lamasery, about fifteen miles away in the northern hills, the elders of the city by sending foodstuffs and bribes persuaded the officer in charge to take his rabble elsewhere.

All this had a most direct bearing on the plans and activities of the missionaries themselves. They had early been accepted into the friendship of one of the leading members of the gentry. His son had called on them in the inn the day after their arrival to proffer his friendship. The father, Cheo Kung Seng, was a Confucian scholar of the old school and withal a man of parts and keen insight. Though fanatically devoted to all the observances of Confucianism, opposed to change of any sort, and having elements of a somewhat lofty patronage in his kindness to the newcomers, he yet interested himself actively on their behalf. His apothecary shop inside the south gate of the city became a sort of headquarters for the missionaries, and

his eldest son, early cherishing a secret love of gospel truth, helped them in every way.

Their interest in the Tibetans coincided with his own business activity, so he was in a position greatly to facilitate for them the making of contacts with the Tibetans of the near-by villages. In response to their representations, he secured for them the services of Akku Seng-ge, who as servant and mentor in things Tibetan, spent the remainder of his life in such devoted service. He also introduced them to the Living Buddha of Da-rge-tgon-ba, and when the threat of danger to Taochow Old City became acute, arranged for them to move to that little lamasery on the Tibetan side of the Tao River just five miles away. So it came about in the summer of 1895, that the missionaries found themselves living among the Tibetans with the cadence of the Tibetan speech sounding in their ears all the day long. One of the more scholarly bonzes was engaged as a teacher, and the red-robed monks took time off from their religious duties to visit with the strangers.

The horseshoe bend of the Tao River is the first of the defenses that make Da-rge-tgon-ba the safe refuge it then was, and since has been, times without number, during the forty years of missionary endeavor in the Kansu-Tibetan Border. The foam-flecked waters separate it from Chinese country, and at its back are the forested wilds of Tibetan country with turbulent clansmen ready to defend the narrow trails that lead along the river banks. The lamasery itself is halfway up a steep hill that overlooks the ferry and possible fords and Tibetan rifles and matchlocks have again and again made good the fortress reputation of Da-rge-tgon-ba. So the pioneers went on with their study of Tibetan,

secure from outside disturbance, and only concerned with winning and retaining the friendship of the monks, whose natural suspicion and dislike of foreigners was tempered by the obligations of hospitality, and the peculiar leniency the Tibetans feel toward refugees of every kind.

The Living Buddha (an incarnation of some Buddhist saint, and so partaking of the nature and powers of a saviour) was one whose contacts with far-away Mongolia and Peking, the imperial capital of China, made him unusually susceptible to outside influence, and so he soon became their very good friend. Here the missionaries made the acquaintance of Akku Lum-bo-shok, part owner of the lamasery and hereditary ruler of some villages ten miles up the river. Here, too, they met Akku Chi-ru, grizzled, scarred ex-robber and headman of the village of Ya-ghun. With that acquaintanceship, a Tibetan community was opened to them along the Tao River above Da-rge-tgon-ba, which for them was the gateway into mysterious Tibetan country.

Thus it was that in the very beginning of the work on the Kansu-Tibetan Border, disorder and pressure from the restless Moslems, the fierce warlike activity of the followers of the Prophet, forced the missionaries into a new intimate contact with Tibetan life that might never have come, or at least been long delayed, if it had not been for that which to the Chinese of the Kansu province seems the worst terror of all, and about which they whisper with bated breath—the revolt of the dreaded Huei-huei. The same factor has since had a direct or indirect effect on advance into Tibetan country a number of times for God can make the terror and wrath of man to praise Him, and the menace of the

Crescent to hasten the planting of the Cross in Tibetan country.

One of the early pioneers returned to the coast to bring his bride back to the border; and throughout the summer and fall the other pioneer, Rev. William Christie, made rapid progress in acquiring that exceptional knowledge of Tibetan language and life that made him the acknowledged leader of the field. From having been merely tolerated as refugees, the missionaries became honored guests until when, in the summer of 1897, the General Superintendent of the China fields visited this lamasery, he was amazed at the welcome accorded him revealing the foothold gained in Tibetan life and activity by the pioneers.

He had come to the frontiers of a closed land, the land of the lamas, and suddenly he was received into a lamasery. While all about him the power of that false faith seemed supreme, yet just as surely, the emissaries of the truth had found a foothold. The monks went on with their worship in the greater and lesser chanting halls, where bronze and gilded idols listened to that worship with ears that hear not, and the industrious routine of Buddhist ritual filled the temple courtyard, but some had even then begun to listen to the Gospel. To Mr. LeLacheur it seemed that in a lamasery he was close to the heart of that great system that rules the hearts and fortunes of men in closed Tibet, and with a sudden access of faith he prayed that this place—the very walls and buildings with all of power and control in the district which they represented—might some day be brought into the possession of the Mission, that the missionaries might be able to establish a Christian center on the Tibetan side of the Tao River.

With the return of the missionary and his bride from the coast, and the return to a normal state of affairs in Taochow Old City, the foreigners again took up their residence in that place, and Da-rge-tgon-ba was left to the monks of the Enlightened One, who with supreme hypocrisy, lived lives of festering evil in the midst of a community of moral decadence and filth. But the prayer of faith had been uttered to a God who never fails to answer such prayer, and though the years rolled on seemingly heedless the answer was on the way.

Chapter IV

SHORTLY after Dr. Simpson's visit to Central China in 1893 it was proposed to extend a line of mission stations all the way across China to the Tibetan border. Arnot's achievement in planning and carrying out such a project in Africa had made it seem a most desirable part of missionary policy, and for The Christian and Missionary Alliance the entire breadth of China beckoned. Partly in pursuance of this ideal a station had been opened in Wuchang and missionary exploration pushed up the Han River. After one or two such preliminary trips the Ekvall brothers left Hankow to follow the course of the Han River to the head of navigation—even with lightest of sampans—at Hanchong, where they left the little boat with its box-like cabin. That boat had been their moving home for weeks, even months, as it had been rowed, poled, and pulled up the tortuous Han. They had passed scores of cities where there was little or no missionary work being done, yet somehow the guiding light had ever moved westward, and at Hanchong they began to tramp the roads that led to the far-away province of Kansu where one city, Minchow, was their goal.

On a summer's day five months after they had left Hankow, they followed the last few miles of trail beside the rushing waters of the Tao River, and came to the city of Minchow just as a great heathen festival was in progress. Here for the first time in all their wanderings—and they had often stopped for days at a time to preach the Gospel in every promising town where people gathered—they saw the strangely clothed barbarous Tibetans. There was a trail a little farther

westward that led to Taochow Old City that had already been occupied. So here was a place that seemed the end of the five months' long journey: here were a people who had never heard the Gospel.

So they mingled with the holiday crowd, finding a ready sale for the gospels they offered. The strangely-garbed people of the border had something quite un-Chinese in manner and habit, and unlike anything the pioneers had seen in all the five months' journey across the breadth of China. Two typical aspects of the life and worship of the people of Minchow dominated the scene. Opium smoking and gambling gave a peculiar dissoluteness to what otherwise might have seemed but an occasion of harmless good-fellowship and buying and selling. And crowds of suddenly frenzied worshipers followed the idol processions from temple to temple, the quick beat of drums and the clash of the cymbals calling the people to worship. Through it all moved the strangers, seeing many strange things and being themselves the strangest sight the people of Minchow had ever seen.

At first Minchow had none of the tolerance for strangers that characterized Taochow Old City, and for hours every inn was closed to them. Finally a Mohammedan (touched perhaps with a fellow-feeling for those who talked of one God among the idolaters, and also maybe shrewdly hoping for future benefit) gave them shelter for the night. But that was the only time this city has ever refused to open doors to the missionaries. A month later property was rented as a mission station, and the next year a missionary home was established in Minchow.

Yellowed letters dated in the last century tell the story of the early days in the far-away field of the

Kansu-Tibetan Border. Letters came but once a month, or even more infrequently, and contact with the outside world functioned so slowly that the writer of a letter had well-nigh forgotten what he had written long before the letter had reached its destination. So in a way rarely to be known in these days, the missionaries were alone—with God and with the people. The letters tell how the presence of God stayed even when the crowds were densest. Once fear had subsided, and the terrifying threat that the foreigners would dig out eyes and hearts to make strange and potent medicines had been disproven, or at least weakened by kindly association, curiosity brought crowds that questioned and stared endlessly but had no knowledge of the God who presenced with the foreigners.

The questions that came in stumbling haste from eager lips, or gleamed from alien eyes that stared so uncompromisingly until it seemed that all around was one great unwinking eye of fixed and burning regard, had to do with clothes, food, skin, hair, eyes, marriage, and home. But not until inner grief or sudden anguish had dimmed that interest did anyone ask about the Saviour. And then the questioning was often in the dull accents of despair, a prelude to the last hopelessness of suicide.

Yet as the missionaries lived with the people, the curtain of Oriental stolidity was raised more and more, to reveal the sorrow, anguish, and despair that rule in heathen hearts. Daughters-in-law in unfriendly homes jumped in the river, wives of loveless marriage took opium, men cut their throats on the doorsteps of their enemies, and the frenzy of death was on the land. But to those that lived in the land the missionaries preached the Gospel of endless ever-springing life in the Saviour,

WILLIAM CHRISTIE

Mr. Christie was one of the two first missionaries to set sail for West China—in 1892. In all he had thirty-three years of active service on the field, fifteen of which he served as Chairman. He is now Vice-President and Treasurer of The Christian and Missionary Alliance.

who gave His life a ransom for many, even for them.

The first converts in Minchow were refugees from the Mohammedan rebellion of the year before. It had been within the compass of God's providences that the fear of a Moslem sword should have been the means of taking the missionaries across the border into a Tibetan lamasery, and it was also in God's providence that the fire and sword of merciless Moslems should drive an entire family from the City of Destruction to the House of the Interpreter. From a burning village in the Hochow district, a family fled along paths of hardship and suffering to come finally to Minchow and work for their bread in the house of the missionary.

They worked for their bread but preserved their proud independence of soul, bowing to no compulsion —and indeed there was none—to make them worship the foreigners' God, or even to appear interested. For they were good Chinese, with character in their daily living, and much merit from an honorable past. But one day the story of the sufferings of the Son of God touched and broke hearts already seamed with the pangs and scars of suffering and sorrow, and the stolid mother of the family, a valiant soul who had dauntlessly lived a life of suffering, wept tears the like of which she had not known for years. To think that the Son of God should suffer so for her! Her heart's all was the willing gift she proffered to requite such love. Old Cheo Chuang Hsing and the eldest daughter soon followed, and so a family was brought through adversity and the turmoil of warfare into the peace of faith in Christ. This was the beginning of the Church of Christ in Minchow; these were the first Christians on the Kansu-Tibetan Border; and it is not amiss here to write the words of their testimony.

"Yes, the Lord caused us to flee from danger and lose all that we thought was good, that we might hear the Good News and come to Him and obtain the best." Of such heart stuff are the beginnings of faith.

Chapter V

TAOCHOW OLD CITY was the last Chinese place on the border. Reinforcements had come to Minchow; the missionaries found doors opening to them in Da-rge-tgon-ba and near-by Tibetan communities; and yet the true typical Tibetan country had not been entered. The traders of Taochow Old City told of the trade of Labrang, and fur merchants from Hankow and Tientsin went there to traffic with the traders and the nomads that brought the wealth of Tibet to that place. Seng-ge, the little squint-eyed Tibetan bonze from Da-rge-tgon-ba who had become servant and general adviser to Mr. Christie, told of the religious importance of Labrang with its lamasery of five thousand bonzes, its great idol houses and large religious festivals. So in the summer of 1896, two of the missionaries with the little Tibetan as guide and servant started out to visit Labrang.

Five miles from Taochow Old City they came to a guardhouse and a gateway in the Tartar wall, its ruined moat and rampart a giant furrow and ridge, the ghost of an ancient boundary that still separates two lands and ways of life for the people of today. The frontier garrison of Chinese soldiers, keepers of the pass, challenged the travelers who in truth had no special permission to pass or travel in Tibetan country. But to that guard all stamped official paper with imposing seals suggested privilege and influence, and having broken the monotony of their existence by a flurry of official zeal and vigilance, they were ready enough to let the strangers go on.

From that point the land and the ways belonged to the Tibetans. Wherever Chinese followed the trails they, like the foreigners, did so by sufferance of the tribesmen who swaggered and fingered the hilts of their swords with needless truculence. And at night the two foreigners found scant welcome and an exposed corner of the courtyard in a Tibetan inn. The next day they left even the barley fields of the last farms behind, and saw for the first time the black tents of the nomads and heard the hoarse baying of the encampment dogs that waylaid the trail.

There is a peculiar fascination to the Tibetan grass lands, and the pioneers had come at a time when the wild austerity of the open steppe under a changing and uncertain sky was softened by the surprising beauty of flower-spangled alpine meadows where rarest blooms flaunted beauty's colors in the midst of brilliant sunshine, cold fog and rain, or even under gusts of pelting hail, when storm clouds march like an army with banners from skyline to skyline.

Under such skies and in such a setting the black tents of the nomads are the sign of human existence, and within sight of them and the sound of the barking of the dogs there is a certain assurance that changes to dread and uncertainty when the encampments are left behind, for the open country is ever the haunts of the hard-riding Tibetan robbers. Yet on that first trip only the fear of attack went with them, for they saw no questionable riders at any of the passes. So they went on, until on the fourth day they reached Labrang and found a place in which to stay in one of the fortress-like community inns of the trading post.

The next day was the big day of the great festival, and the missionaries mingled with the crowds that

filled all the roads leading to the lamasery. That in itself was a great city of the whitewashed cloisters of the monks, arranged in rows and tiers, that compared to the confusion of the trading post or even the average Chinese city of that time, seemed part of a well-executed plan. And towering far above the flat roofs of the cloisters the great chanting halls and idol houses were the well-built consummation of that plan.

The habits and manners of the fair-goers were utterly different from anything in Chinese life. Men and women mingled in boisterous good-fellowship and bantering—wild merriment interspersed throughout all the observance of worship and the externals of religious zeal—though no gaity could change the pathos of the pilgrim path around the lamasery where the pilgrims went chanting prayers and spinning their prayer wheels. Some passed more slowly, measuring the road with their bodies' lengths by repeated prostrations in the dust, thereby hoping to build some footing and win some ground in the sixty-eight ways or cycles of Buddhist salvation.

Those two missionaries, alone among all those devoted worshipers, found that the crowd had none of the easy religious tolerance of the Chinese. The tracts and gospels given and offered were thrown back in their faces, and in the mutter and murmur of the crowd, their pointed allusions to the public burning of all the books and papers left in Labrang by another itinerant missionary, and further suggestion that any who accepted the books were liable to fine or the burning of a brand in the hand, indicated that the task would not be easy. In the open market place threats and ugly looks changed to deeds, and the stones began to fly. One umbrella was but a flimsy protection from

a Tibetan stoning. The members of a Chinese mob, however vicious in intent, throw but indifferently with stiff-armed awkwardness, but the Tibetan, trained from childhood in throwing stones at cattle, dogs, and even fellow-Tibetans, delivers his throw with the force and accuracy of a professional ball-player. A nasty cut on the head of one seemed but the beginning of trouble for the missionaries when help came from an unexpected source. A band of Tibetan soldiers with drawn swords charging into the mob seemed for a moment to threaten a sudden murderous end to it all, but turned out to be a guard ordered by the treasurer of the lamasery to protect the foreigners and escort them to the official balcony above the square. There as guests of that official they witnessed the "devil dance" of the great religious festival.

The mixed motives that have again and again impelled the fanatical leaders of a system utterly hostile to Christianity to extend welcome and protection to missionaries can never be fully understood aside from the providences of God. But often intellectual curiosity, the restless desire to question and learn something about the lands beyond the seas, prompts friendliness and courtesy. Then, too, a certain assurance in their well-buttressed position, an ill-concealed contempt of the seemingly insignificant attack by isolated preachers, already swamped by heathenism, makes them willing to ignore religious differences and be disposed to unbend.

This first visit to Labrang with its auspicious outcome fostered the hope that it might soon be opened as a mission station. Indeed on the next occasion when Mr. Christie and Mr. LeLacheur, after narrowly escaping robbers in the grass lands, visited the place they

actually rented a room in the inn and the news went to America that a station had been opened in Labrang, that Alliance missionaries had entered and were working in the closed land.

"Tibet, whose opening doors so clearly touch the portals of His coming," wrote Dr. Simpson in glad rejoicing that the task for which the Alliance had been founded was well begun, maybe even then hastening to completion as the last years of the century seemed about to herald prophetic changes.

But that realization was not to be for nearly a generation. Long before the letter telling of the opening of Labrang had reached the homeland, the presumptuous innkeeper who had dared to rent to the foreigners had been exiled, his property had been confiscated, and public proclamation had been posted forbidding reception of the preachers of the Jesus religion even for a night. The gospels and tracts left by the pioneers were gathered and publicly burned. Possession of a single page was made punishable by the loss of the right hand, and Labrang again was securely sealed against the Gospel. So much so that my father years later wrote,

"Ten years have passed since we made this first trip to Labrang, and the place is still strongly fortified against the truth. It seems as if the feeling of animosity against the gospel messengers has intensified with time."

Chapter VI

A RECORD of the earliest efforts to push missionary advance into northeast Tibet would be incomplete without mention of the occupation and the closing of Pao-an. Still burdened with the responsibility of knocking at all possible doors until one was found that opened into Tibetan country and Tibetan communities, and still unreconciled to the merely incidental Tibetan contacts, the missionaries yet found themselves shut out of Labrang. But in seeking for some justice for the luckless innkeeper who had forfeited possessions and livelihood to take them in, the missionaries discovered the tiny military post of Pao-an (Protection of the Peace) just across the border and not far from the western extremity of the Peh Ling.

The region is one of peculiar racial mixtures. Among those of true Tibetan stock are communities of Mongolian and unidentified aboriginal descent. It is a center of Tibetan and lamaistic learning, home of the master idol painters of all northwest Tibet, and a region of fierce feuds and bloody intertribal warfare. But in the walled city of Pao-an the missionaries found a place and began their work. Visits were made to the lamasery of Rung-wo, about ten miles up the valley, the friendship of even the leaders from among the religious heads of the district was gained, and for a time the beginnings of the work prospered.

One of the great sorcerer sects, the Ngak-wa, exponents of the old pre-lamaistic religion of Tibet, has its headquarters and center in this region. The adepts of this ancient cult well realize that in the teachings

of the Gospel there is no possibility of any such compromise as has made them a sort of left-handed branch of Northern Buddhism, so nowhere is resistance to the Gospel stronger than among the sorcerers of northeast Tibet. So in the region around Pao-an the sorcerers intoned their charms and pronounced their most fearful curses, yet the foreigners lived on and spoke everywhere the name of Jesus.

Then one of the periodic droughts parched the crops and burned the land and trouble began to brew. Given certain stimuli, violence is second nature to the Tibetan, so violence broke out in Pao-an and roisterers broke into the mission station. But at that time a fellow-missionary who was carrying firearms for protection on the wild Tibetan trails had come to see the resident missionaries, and his prompt bravery and bluff drove out the mob and the danger passed. But for weeks there were mutterings of trouble and friends (praise God, there are always friends) brought warnings and offered advice. Yet the final outbreak came with unexpected rapidity and violence.

A soldier from the Chinese garrison barely had time to bring a warning so that the missionaries could flee through a back door before the attack by the Tibetan mob was on. The bolder ones scaled the walls, dropping within to open up the big gates, and then the full fury of the mob struck in all its senseless and wanton destruction. There were only the furniture and the stores and belongings of the missionaries to be found, but the mob made a thorough job of destruction, for rage was even stronger than cupidity, and they smashed and ruined that which in their saner moments they would have saved as most desirable loot. Even the foodstuffs were scattered and thrown into the river.

The mob chiefly sought the missionaries, but they were nowhere to be found, so the enfuriated Tibetans terrorized the town for hours, and the little Chinese garrison in the yamen prepared for any eventualities. But after dark, with an escort of forty horsemen, the foreigners were hurried across the border. Thus another unequivocal repulse was written into the records of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission, and for years advance was only possible in the Chinese field, Tibetan country remaining largely closed.

Chapter VII

THE first phase of missionary work on the Kansu-Tibetan Border was brought to a close by the Boxer uprising of 1900. The direct violence of that planned and directed attempt to throw off the threat of Western domination, and by driving the foreigners into the sea and killing off the Christians turn back the clock of time, did not really reach to far-off Kansu. Yet when some of the missionary force left early in the spring of that year, the mutterings of discontent and even active hate were already discernible, and it was with heavy hearts that the missionaries said good-bye to the three or four Christians in Minchow.

In the heart of the pioneer there is a peculiar tenderness toward the first converts to the Gospel. After the firstfruits have been garnered, the process of multiplication—the healthy and inevitable contagion of the Gospel—makes the salvation and redemption of the heathen something more a matter of course, but in the first converts the miracle of God's working is so obvious and wonderful, and the fruits of His grace so marvelous, that the first converts are indeed children, begotten in faith, agony, and a strangely satisfying joy. But the time had come when the infants must be left, so the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, as farewells were said, constituted a peculiarly solemn scene.

In Minchow itself there were rumors that the secret, antidynastic, antiforeign, Elder Brother Society intended violence to any and all who believed, so in a special way the events of the future were unknown,

and only faith could look ahead and be assured that all was well. Yet there was no hint that the departure of the missionaries was anything but a routine furlough.

The months of that fateful year came on and the terror of the I Ho Chuan broke up Christian work in all of China. Nineteen Alliance missionaries and a number of children were martyred in northern Shansi, and that work was so broken up that it was never reopened by the Alliance, although another mission by arrangement went on to build a fruitful endeavor on that blood-stained foundation. The missionaries in South China had to evacuate their newly opened field. Mobs howled in Central China, and missionaries were evacuated to places of safety under the guns of protecting gunboats. So finally consular orders to evacuate reached the far northwest and the remaining four missionaries left for the coast.

No special danger threatened locally. Tong Fu Hsiang and his Kansu troops might be acquiring a doubtful reputation as the braves advanced to sweep the foreigners into the sea in the environs of Peking, but Taochow Old City in far-off Kansu, with the friendly refuge of Da-rge-tgon-ba just across the Tao River, was safe enough, yet orders were orders and so the missionaries left.

They took the south road from Minchow, following the course of the Pek Lung Kiang to where they could get boats and float swiftly toward the Yangtze and the safety of river-boat travel on that open waterway. But before they had reached the point where the party could take boats, some were robbed and taken prisoners by a band of local banditti. One of the missionaries was stabbed and fainted from loss of blood, and

for some days their situation was a most serious one. Then the people of the village where they were held captive, fearing future retribution and trouble for the community, finally brought pressure to bear on the bandits, with the result that the foreigners were released, their goods and belongings restored, and they were permitted to go on their way. With the arrival of this party at the coast, the evacuation from the Kansu-Tibetan Border field was complete.

It was the first of a succession of evacuations, partial or entire; that have taken place from this field since it was opened forty years ago. In every case it has been because of the threat or reality of danger and trouble, yet in each instance the forced withdrawal has been in God's providence overruled for good, and what has seemed like a defeat has become merely an occasion for reorganization in prayer and sacrifice that work on the borders of Tibet might go on, and that work from this hard-won vantage point might be pushed into that yet closed land.

With the first evacuation the reconnaissance stage of endeavor had passed. Five years of effort had clearly revealed the limits for that time of missionary work on the Kansu-Tibetan Border. Like the rest of the Chinese field to the north and east, Minchow offered the opportunity of preaching Christ to thousands of the sons of Han. Throughout the whole of southwestern Kansu a sturdy peasant people—stolid, strong, somewhat slow, and distinctly conservative—offered a challenging but not an easy field.

Taochow Old City represented the limited opportunity of that day for doing work among the Tibetans. All of northeast Tibet lay beyond the mountainous western horizon, but the repulse from Labrang and the

expulsion from Pao-an proved that the day had not yet come for advance into Tibetan country. Camped at the borders of a closed and hostile land, the missionaries might wait and pray but could not enter. Of all places along the border, Taochow Old City was the place where waiting would not be fruitless, but would furnish the scores of contacts that were to be instrumental in opening doors to the land beyond that border, and the sight and sound of things Tibetan would not let the praying cease.

PART II

NARRATIVE

A true chronology is the essential framework of any tale. So before we stop to analyse the implications and special emphasis of events, we shall marshall them in review, letting them come in their natural sequence to keep step with the count of the years. The record of the last thirty-five years on the Kansu-Tibetan Border is a tale of stirring events, hairbreadth escapes, miracles of the grace of God, but most of all the story of His overruling providence.

"Our times are in His hand—" and He who knoweth the end from the beginning has ordered the events of the years. Ever along the way He has made the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of wrath will He restrain until the end, when the story of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission shall be recorded in the finished chronology of the final reckoning.

PART II

NARRATIVE

Expansion and Fruitage—1900-1909
Growth—1909-1912
Crisis—1912-1914
Danger—1914-1915
Harvest and Advance—1915-1927
Chaos and Readjustment—1927-1932
Growth Anew—1932-

LIVING BUDDHA OF LABRANG

Jamyang Jappa, the highest living Buddha in northeast Tibet, having rule over more than 100 living buddhas and lamaseries, has proved himself a warm friend of the missionaries. He is the thirteenth incarnation of the Laughing Buddha.

FROM MR. EKVALL'S DISTRICT

A Tibetan man and two women of Lhamo District, where the author of this book is stationed, standing in front of their home.

Chapter I

WITH the return of missionaries to the field after 1900, we take up the record of work that has continued in an unbroken line down to the present, for though the missionaries have again and again been evacuated because of disturbed conditions, the work has always gone on. There had come into being a Church that with God's blessing carried on through thick and thin. Thus the history of the last thirty-five years or more is a web woven in one piece of all the victories, defeats, joys, sorrows, pains, and pleasures of growth. It is packed with stirring incident, and across the rapid narrative there move the gracious providences of God's ordering, turning danger, disease, disaster, death, and all the tribulations that follow warfare and violence to the furtherance of the Gospel.

In 1902, when the first party to return prepared for the long westward journey up the Han River, there were plenty of prophets to shake their heads and advise against such rash haste. All the aftermath of the Boxer Uprising was still seething and heaving in many sections of the Chinese Empire. At Hankow where the start was to be made in the little native boats, there is always an excessive amount of head shaking and the making of gloomy prognostications. In the fancied security that comes with the sight of British and American gunboats, and the comforting item of river steamboat transportation, the interior of western China always seems vaguely filled with impending disaster.

At that time no one knew what had taken place in Kansu. The throne of the Manchu dynasty had been

shaken to its very foundations; the exercise of its authority seemed erratic and uncertain; and in many portions of the empire the secret antidynastic societies that often included virulent antiforeignism in their programs, were making the most of their opportunity. What would the first scouts of the reoccupation of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission find as they traveled westward?

They found Taochow Old City comparatively peaceful and old friends glad to welcome them back, but they found Minchow in a state of terrorization. The Ko Lao Huei (Elder Brother Society) had, by intimidation and political trickery, obtained control of affairs. The Christians had been forced to flee; the Hochow refugees had gone back to their village home in the Hochow district; and residence was unsafe. Violence if not rebellion was brewing, and for a couple of years the probable outcome was fraught with menace.

Then a strong forthright official of the type who was willing to stake his official future on the achievement of the present and go to any extreme came to the district. Culprits and plotters were taken red-handed. When executioners, who were afraid of the secret vengeance of the society, were afraid to carry out the pronounced sentence, the Secretary of the Yamen stepped in and carried through the execution of the ringleader with his own hands. After months of uncertainty, Chang Ta Ren finally restored order and was able to guarantee peace in the City of Minchow, and in the natural accession of prestige that had come to all missionaries as a result of the settlement of the Boxer troubles, when the missionaries finally came back to Minchow they found that a truly official welcome awaited them.

After the work was consolidated in Minchow and Taochow Old City, missionary occupation of the field was pushed into the stations of Titao and Chone—one a Chinese and one a Tibetan station—in 1905. The opening of Titao signified not only the beginning of work in a great district, the "blessed land" north of the Peh Ling which logically included the districts of Hochow and Kong Chang, but also indicated that expansion of the work was to be along lines somewhat different from the earliest vision of the pioneers. Until God opened up in some very special way opportunity for advance among the Tibetans, there was only a limited field among those people in Taochow and its environs, but by turning north and east from Minchow, and leaving the ideal of work to be done exclusively along the border, the Alliance accepted responsibility for a large area of Chinese territory, thereby committing the Mission to the doing of Chinese work essentially similar to the work carried on in Central and South China.

For years this work among all the needy Chinese people of southwestern Kansu increasingly claimed the attention and almost monopolized the time and efforts of the missionary force. Missionary after missionary, fired with the romantic ideal of taking the Gospel to the Tibetans, came to the border, and finding a closed land with but limited opportunity of work along the border, accepted the inevitable and turned to the Chinese field to find not only opportunity but a slowly accumulative response to the Gospel.

This response began in Taochow Old City in the conversion of Cheo Hsien Seng, the eldest son of Cheo Lao Tai Ie. He had been the first to greet the pioneers as they rested in the inn after their long questing jour-

ney. Maybe it was his greeting that brought assurance that the quest was over and Taochow Old City was the place. His friendship had been their stay and counsel. His father had made the first introduction that placed the pioneers in contact with the Lama of Da-rge-tgon-ba and had later made possible the use of that place in Tibetan country as a refuge.

Now, after years of meditation and study of the Scripture, Cheo Hsien Seng made open and complete confession of his faith in Christ as his Saviour. He broke with participation or even passive acceptance of a share in the community idol worship at festival time; he broke with a frankly immoral habit of life; and marrying one of his mistresses he began a Christian home founded on a new ideal. But most of all, he broke with Confucian tradition and worship of the spirits of his ancestors, and the ancestral tablets that were in a sense the sign and symbol of the complete patriarchal home. To his father's well-nigh boundless fury he replied with a scholarly apologium couched in the highest tradition of old-style Chinese literary composition. With beautiful Chinese logic he wound up with a simple statement of the inexorable compelling force of truth on honest mind and open heart that has something the ring of that other witness we know: "I can do none else; so help me God."

The father put into effect what amounted to the disinheriting of his son. When that failed he went to the length of lodging an indictment of "the unfilial son," with the nearest magistrate, which if proven carried with it the sentence of "slicing"—a horrible form of capital punishment. In the changing manners of a new age that old law was dead, and the magistrate conveniently ignored the indictment. But so great was

old Cheo Lao Tai Ie's rage, that his son had to take refuge in Tibetan country, where he finally secured a grant of land near Da-rge-tgon-ba, and in the "Gospel Garden," began a new life cut off from the position and comparative luxury of the past.

Cheo Hsien Seng's position for a time was a lonely one as far as his immediate locality was concerned, but all over the field, the response of Chinese hearts to the loving claims of the Gospel was taking place. In Titao another Confucian scholar found in God's Word the answer to all the deep questionings of his mind and heart, and finding the answer found, too, a command he had to obey. Humble artisans and farmers in the Taochow New City district, and men of affairs in Minchow, began to make the individual choice that leads to association in holy fellowship with those of like faith. The refugees of Hochow, by their zeal and earnestness, were establishing a center of faith in their out-of-the-way village in that district, and all over the field the beginnings of individual faith proclaimed the birth pangs of a Church in southwestern Kansu.

Only in Taochow Old City was there maintained an effort to reach the Tibetans who came from many distant places. The only advance step among the Tibetans was the occupation of the town of Chone, down on the Tao River, about fifteen miles from Taochow Old City. It was the logical center for work among at least a part of the Tibetan clans, and communities that owed allegiance to the Chone Tu Si, or as he was later known to the missionaries, the Chone Prince. He had inherited hereditary right of rule from a line that went back eighteen generations to the tradition of migration from Lhasa itself, and that rule extended over the forty-eight "banners" of Tibetans. Some of these lived

in the broken country bordering the Peh Ling, some along the banks or in the drainage of the Tao River, and some, called the Te-bus, lived in the at-that-time as yet unexplored country south of the jagged beauty of the Min Shan, that for the early missionaries formed a wild and challenging horizon—the beginning of the inaccessible hinterland of Tibetan country.

Not only was Chone the seat of rule of this feudal prince, but it was also the site of one of the larger of the border lamaseries. It was famous, not only for its membership of not-unlearned monks and powerful, well-traveled, Living Buddhas, but chiefly because it possessed one of the rare sets of the wood-cut printing blocks of the one hundred and eight volumes of the Buddhist Scriptures, and the one hundred and twenty volumes of the commentaries. The set was one of three extant in Eastern Tibet, and as a consequence the possession of this set greatly enhanced the reputation and sanctity of the lamasery. The ill-concealed distrust of the Chone Prince, the downright opposition of the lamasery, and the elaborate curses of the sorcerer priests, did not prevent the occupation of Chone, and here much work was done through guest-room contacts and itineration among the Tibetans.

Even in this Tibetan station, the pressing claims of fruitful work among the local Chinese in near-by Chinese communities, and also a sort of oversight of the Taochow New City work, diverted much time and strength from the doing of strictly Tibetan work. Yet across from the mission station the forested Tibetan hills hinted of the wild and aloof people that lived in the unexplored depths of the Min Shan, and at festival time the blare of conchs and trumpets from the lamasery announced the ancient dominance of Buddhism over all the land.

Chapter II

THE slow progress of individual salvation went on until the aggregate was numbered in terms of churches — tiny groups of believers — pin points of light in the blanket darkness of heathenism. The time came when all such groups should be linked in fellowship and a common understanding, so the first native conference was held in Minchow in the winter of 1909.

Winter on the Kansu-Tibetan Border is no balmy affair. The winds are rough and rude; the passes are filled with snow; dawn comes late and dusk soon, as the traveler hastens to catch up with the shortening hours of daylight. Yet for the sturdy folk of Kansu the weather hold no terrors, and a large, happy group of Christians gathered in that place. From standing alone they found themselves a part of a large whole, and happy Christian fellowship met a real need among a people who are as naturally gregarious as the Chinese.

It was a time when all over the world the united spiritual aspirations and prayers of Christian people were bearing fruit in remarkable spiritual stirrings, that were in themselves fraught with possibilities of both blessing and disaster. The missionaries of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission, though on a lonely, difficult, and peculiarly isolated field, were yet deeply sympathetic to these yearning stirrings of the Spirit, and that same seeking expectancy had been communicated to the Christians.

The signs of revival were markedly evident, but before they could bear fruit, the devil created his own diversion that was significant of the religious conditions

and manifestations current throughout the border country where the mystical esoteric forms of Tibetan Buddhism and Shamanism have exerted a strong influence and left a deep impression on Chinese religious life. One of these Christians, an earnest humble man who had been subject to demon influence before his conversion, became demon-possessed, and for a time, simulating Christian enduement, was the center of attention and interest. But soon by blasphemy and strange eagerness to receive some sort of worship, the evil spirit overreached himself, was detected, and by the laying on of hands in prayer and faith in the Name of Jesus, cast out. So never for an instant were the missionaries allowed to forget that behind the casual externals of cause and effect, and the everyday events of their work, was the hidden potent conflict of spiritual forces.

This event was specially significant of the question first openly raised at that time that was to appear again and again in all the blessing of the coming years, and finally was to result in schism and a division in the work. God's blessing has graciously overruled, and a Church to the glory of His Name has come to a degree of maturity in Kansu both within and without the work of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, yet we are tempted to ask, "Might not the results have been doubled if Christ had not been preached in contention, though at times it did result in a wider witness?"

The growth of the Church continued year by year, and shortly after the Native Church Conference in Minchow, two advance steps were taken that had far-reaching effects on the future of the work. The opening of Hochow, sixty miles west of Titao, as an outstation not only foreshadowed the future preponderance of the northern half of the Chinese field and was

the beginning of a work that has for years been one of the most promising churches, but brought in a special sense the challenge of Mohammedanism in the field of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission to the attention of the missionaries, for with the opening of Hochow the Mecca of Islam in China had been entered. Shortly after this opening of Hochow as an outstation, the City of Kong Chang, seventy miles east of Titao, was also entered with the Good News, and an outstation established that later as a mission station was destined to grow along somewhat uniquely indigenous lines. Being also north of the Peh Ling, it made the "blessed land" the larger part of the Chinese field.

The second step of great importance during this period was the establishment of a Bible School for the training of native workers, and that school was located in Titao. In the first class there were over a score from all parts of the field who attended. And in the make-up of that first class the missionaries could well thank God for the quality of the first converts. It was as though the danger and persecution of the early days exerted a selective influence on the quality of the converts, for in that first class were gathered some remarkable Christians and outstanding men and leaders.

In planning for the school, the obvious need of giving Bible training to men who would act as colporteurs and evangelists was the determining factor, and so these earnest souls came to the rented courtyard in Titao simply to learn God's truth, taking by dictation and copying the courses that were to become textbooks. But in the future which God alone knew, a great political change was already near, and the Chinese Revolution of 1912, was already being created in men's thinking and desire. The concomitant of that upheaval

and its prolonged aftermath were to linger on in violence, civil warfare, and recurrent troubles, forcing repeated evacuations of the missionary force in whole or in part. So in that little courtyard men were being trained to carry all the varied burdens that were soon to rest upon their shoulders, and for the exigencies of God's future, God's plan and supply were already being created.

For years at varying intervals efforts had been made to move into Tibetan country but only Chone had been occupied. At this time however two moves in the Tibetan work were taken. Ten days' journey to the north, Kweiteh, a border city somewhat like Taochow Old City, in its position and the opportunities afforded for carrying on Tibetan work, was opened as a mission station.

Yet even before that took place the little lamasery, just five miles from Taochow Old City, where the pioneers had found refuge on the far side of the Tao River ten years before, came into the possession of the Mission. It had become practically bankrupt; its Living Buddha had gone to Mongolia never to come back; and finally the stewards offered it to the Mission for a price that was a mere fraction of its value. With that purchase the Mission obtained a foothold in Tibetan country in a double sense, for not only did the land and buildings with material rights—forest, field, and grazing privileges—come with it, but there passed to the Mission certain intangible but none the less real assets of leadership in the community on the far Tibetan side of the stream. At a time when a visit to the lamasery of Charki, in the northern hills, only fifteen miles away from Taochow Old City, without incurring the curses and mayhap even a stoning from the bonzes,

was a cause for much congratulation, the importance of this foothold was a magnified cause for praise and rejoicing. And in commemoration of a prayer and claim in faith made years before, the place was renamed the LeLacheur Memorial Station.

Except when attempting entrance into Tibetan country the missionaries had lived for years in almost complete security, but with the outbreak of the revolution in October of 1911, there came a sudden sense of menace. Communication with the outside world ceased for almost three months. During that time garbled but sufficiently terrible reports of the Sian Massacre among the Scandinavian Alliance Mission, when numbers of missionary children were butchered along with adults, by a blood-crazed mob that had first attacked the Manchus in that city and then had finished up with the missionaries, gave additional cause for alarm. Although all were sympathetically predisposed toward the cause of the revolution as representative of liberalism and progress as against the repressive reactionary policy of the Manchus, yet no one was sure what the attitude of the revolutionists toward foreigners and Christian Missions really was.

The immediate concern was with the situation in Kansu. The viceroy was a strong-willed reactionary Manchu with a strong antiforeign bias. After the Manchu Government in Peking collapsed he continued for some time his policy of resistance to the revolution. And having won the active aid of the hard-fighting Kansu Moslems it seemed for a time that he would make Kansu the location for a die-hard stand on behalf of the Manchu dynasty. Through it all he made no effort to conceal his hatred of the foreigners, and the provincial capital became a dangerous place for the

foreign community. In Kansu safety was a matter of local variation, and in Titao, as both the military and civil officials were outstandingly friendly, the foreign community of Lanchow, both Belgian engineers and missionaries of the China Inland Mission, found a refuge. Other missionaries, some of our own Mission and some of the China Inland Mission also came; resources were pooled; and all hoped for the best.

The other stations of the Kansu-Tibetan Border had their own problems. Sympathetic intrigue and bad feeling made its appearance in Minchow. Again the Elder Brother Society made threats to loot and murder. Under the sorrow attending the loss of a child, and the strain of the situation, the mental health of one of the missionaries broke, so all moved to Taochow. Even in Chone sympathetic lawlessness created much uncertainty, and plans were made to use the newly-acquired lamasery of Da-rge-tgon-ba, from now on known as Luba Si, as a refuge. And all over the province that particular fear that is peculiar to Kansu—the fear of a Mohammedan rebellion—filled every one's thinking, but was only spoken of in whispers.

So the winter passed. With the coming of spring and the final defeat of the Moslem troops by the Revolutionists and the formation of a new provincial government, the danger passed. One-half of the field force, shattered by the strain and ready for furlough, left for the homeland. For those who stayed on there was the burden of caring for all the churches that were now prospering greatly, and just as spring days broke the power of winter, the first class of the Bible School was graduated to the work which lay before it.

Chapter III

ALL through the months of strain the work had gone on without interruption. Indeed a special spiritual awakening seemingly had come with the pressure of danger and uncertainty. There was a feeling of change in the air. Old moorings had been shaken — in some instances destroyed — and in the shake-up of change many were turning toward the Gospel. So when the uncertainty passed, times of fruitful blessing seemed just ahead.

Instead, came fresh disaster. Less than a month after graduating the class from the Bible School course, the one who had taught that class for three years sickened with typhus and went home. Another one of the field force went very low with the same disease, but recovered; yet the protracted period of convalescence placed him on the shelf for months. With a peculiar feeling of isolation the field force of just six missionaries gathered for conference in Luba Si.

A rapidly-growing work making a circuit of hundreds of miles in Chinese country was their responsibility, and soon there would be only five workers, for a missionary widow and her children were to leave for the homeland. Everything but the promises of God were against them yet it was a time of remarkable revival stirrings. Many souls were saved and great blessings manifest throughout the entire field. The Christian community of the New City country work had built their own chapel, and as revival swept through the district, family after family came to the Lord. In Titao, during a series of meetings, the most remarkable ingathering ever witnessed up to that time took place.

Within the circle of the relations of Keo Hsien Seng, the first convert, more than sixty souls turned to the Lord.

And while the missionaries were gathered at Luba Si in loneliness, yet conscious in an unique way of the presence of God, blessing came to the local Tibetan and half-Tibetan community. The sick were healed, demons were cast out, and Tibetan homes cleansed of every vestige of idolatry. Salvation flowed into the village of Luba. Idols were burned, idol scrolls were destroyed, and the rubbish of charms and hoary shrines tossed into the Tao River that carried away the wreckage and then became the waters of baptism for those who publicly confessed their Lord. Humanly speaking, at the most unlikely of times, salvation crossed the border.

For months the blessing continued and the work prospered, as the missionaries, traveling almost continuously, . . . attempted to spread themselves as thinly as was humanly possible. And now God's gracious providence in early choosing and providing for the training of native church leaders and workers became manifest. Where there were no missionaries to take charge, there were gifted and well-trained natives to step into the breach and bear the burden.

Again in times of blessing the devil's counterfeit became increasingly active. Finally the issue of teaching and practice that has since become a distinctive movement intervened to qualify the blessing of those days. Yet the split that later came into the work was for a time held in abeyance as the churches prospered.

It was at this time that the only deputation from the Home Board ever to visit this field, in the person of the Foreign Secretary, made the strenuous and hazard-

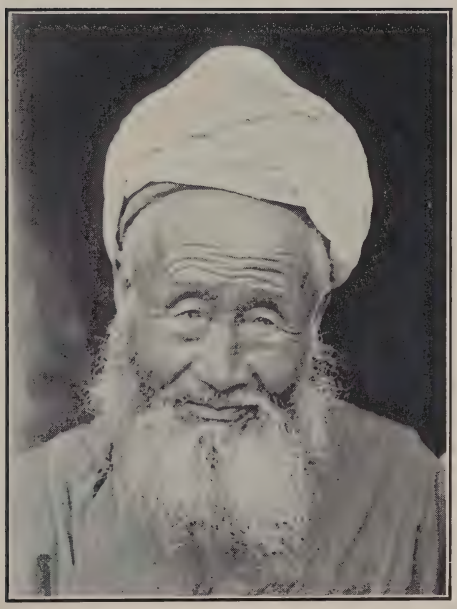
ous overland trip to the Kansu-Tibetan Border. He not only brought encouragement to those on the field, but returned home with a new sympathetic appreciation of the extent of the work, the manifest blessing in the Chinese field, and the challenge of the ever-growing opportunities of work among the Tibetans. As a result, quite a number of recruits came to the field, and with renewed hope plans were laid for general advance. Until the newcomers had acquired use of the language, the field force remained concentrated in the stations of Taochow Old City, Minchow, and Luba Si. For it seemed that with all the experience of the past, and the spiritual momentum of the present, the time had at last come for that advance. All hearts asked the question, "Where shall it be and what shall be the sign?"

Chapter IV

INSTEAD there came the wrath of man. At this juncture the peace of the province was broken and the field invaded and devastated by the army of the infamous bandit chief, White Wolf. His army—an army having neither goal nor political creed, but blindly habituated to pillage and bloodshed—marched across half the breadth of China, and in the spring of 1914, attacked and took the City of Minchow. With the sudden scaling of the city walls by the intrepid vanguard, the missionaries were in acute and terrible danger that increased as looting and rapine systematically spoiled the city.

The ladies and children were hidden in a secret closet under the eaves, and one lone missionary throughout the long hours bluffed and cajoled the bandits—bandying compliments and Chinese courtesy with men whose trigger fingers seemed to itch ominously. Horses, provisions, and personal belongings for a time placated them and brought safety, but late in the day they insistently demanded a more awful price. After a fruitless search the house was fired. In the confusion the blaze was extinguished, but the bandits became even more insistent in their demands until just as the missionary was about to be killed, some native Christian women hiding in the surrounding dusk, gave themselves up, thereby saving his life.

Darkness brought the first possible chance of escape, and the party of missionaries, guided and aided by faithful Chinese Christians and servants, made good its escape over the wall by a rope—from a city filled with violence, horror, and the first lurid flickerings of



A Typical Salar Moslem

A Village Mosque

a general burning. Flight was a slow, confused progress toward the Tibetan hills, and at daybreak they took refuge in a forest opposite a large village. Late in the day that same forest, now filled with refugees of every description, was surrounded by bandits who combed the woods with rifle fire. As darkness deepened, there again seemed no way of escape, until a Tibetan hunter, encountered in the darkness and confusion, led the little party of footsore, famished refugees out of the wood and the fear of death, and by secret trails took them to a safe refuge far back in the Tibetan foothills. Days later, having lost everything — for the mission buildings in Minchow had been burned—they reached Luba Si and temporary safety.

The missionaries, in Taochow Old City, had fled to Luba Si at the first approach of the bandit army, and had been able to move the girls of the Girls' School as well as such belongings as could be quickly collected and carried. Yet the city and district suffered far more than the City of Minchow, for the Moslem traders, many of whom possessed firearms and were accustomed to the perils of Tibetan travel, elected to fight, and for a time put up a good defense, holding the bandits at bay. Even when the bandits finally took the city, many of these Moslems, with a strange, fanatical, suicidal fury made their homes and the mosque fortresses which they defended to the last, putting fire to them and dying in the flames rather than letting their corpses be dishonored by infidel hands.

The fury of the bandits was an unleashed storm of cruelty and slaughter, and the streets of Taochow Old City—the city gateways especially—were piled with the slain and the dying. But the city of their repulse and losses had no charm for the bandits and they quickly

withdrew leaving suffering and misery behind them. In those days when men sought for the members of their families throughout a desolated countryside and often found them sick and wounded, the missionaries working night and day brought comfort and healing to hundreds, winning for themselves once and for all a high and peculiar place in the public regard. As they rendered first-aid they also initiated and supervised the enforcement of sanitary regulations, saving the city from a threatened epidemic of plague. When the government officials arrived to reorganize the district, amid all the conflicting jealousies of Chinese and Moslems, and among the latter of Old Sect and New Sect, they occupied a position of universal confidence. So by their good offices they saved lives and hastened the re-establishment of normal conditions.

The missionaries mostly lived at Luba Si, riding the five miles to Taochow Old City as occasion required. Many of them had lost everything but the clothes in which they stood but for life and health they gave God thanks with a strange new thankfulness. The Christians of the two districts had also suffered greatly, but their numbers were intact, and in a new fellowship of a common experience of danger and loss there came new sympathy and mutual love. And the devotion and sacrifice of the Christians in saving and shielding the missionaries beggars all praise and deserves an undying gratitude.

Just when the work had begun to prosper, violence and a bandit menace had come from the east halfway across China to attack the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission. Now on the other side from behind the rampart of the Tibetan mountains there came a new and unexpected danger. For years the more law-abiding Ti-

betans of the lower Tao River district had suffered from the sporadic raids of the Te-bus who were at once turbulent and poverty stricken. At the time of the White Wolf raid, as always, there had been a sympathetic outbreak of violence among the Tibetans, and more than ever certain defiles and passes became the lurking places of robbers.

Out of this difficult but by no means uncommon situation there emerged a strangely concerted and malignantly directed attempt to wipe out the missionaries and forever prevent missionary occupation of Tibetan territory. The hungry, greedy Te-bus hoped for loot, the sorcerers and religious leaders prophesied success, the Living Buddhas blessed the effort, but back of it all was somethng more that worked to unite the mutually suspicious clansmen to the striking of one final decisive blow. Thus it came that seven hundred Te-bus crossed the passes—the largest raiding party that had ever come down into the border country.

Whatever their plans, the attack failed of being a complete surprise, or there would probably be no mission station of Luba Si today. Friendly villagers brought word that the raiders were camped just a few miles away. Flight was impossible. Some days before in response to a plea for protection to the Chinese officials a number of rifles and some ammunition had been sent as illustrative of the only law in operation at that time in the entire region. So knowing they were about to be attacked, the refugees strengthened their defenses as best they might, and prayerfully awaited the outcome.

Still they prayed, as the heavy suspense of waiting in the dark grew unbearable, and the very stillness seemed ominously more than natural. And when the

barking of a dog, the wild Tibetan yell, and the roll of gunfire from attackers and defenders shattered that silence, they prayed on, for in the upper story of the one-time idol house, now made into a missionary residence, helpless women and children awaited the outcome of the noise that closed in from the fields and ringed the compound with strife—an outcome that was to mean either life or an awful death beneath the swords and spears of the attackers.

Unquestionably the attackers were taken aback at the watchful resistance they encountered, but they had staked much on the raid, so again and again they rallied to the attack, but were finally beaten off and retired with their losses. Once defeated they had to hasten their retreat, for defeated raiders are nowhere safe, so when the sun arose the mission station of Luba Si still stood as a missionary outpost on the Tibetan border.

The aftermath of this perplexing incident would seem to indicate that in a peculiar sense this event was a turning point as regards missionary effort among the Tibetans. The nomads and other Tibetans have no particular love for the Te-bus, and with their defeat at Luba Si, and with the news of that defeat that winged a speedy way to the most distant tribes and clans, there came a sudden grudging but real admiration for the once-hated foreigners. Missionaries arriving in distant places have found that the historical memory of the attack on Luba Si and its outcome has been not so bad an introduction to the wild Tibetans. Then, too, certain facts were of a religious significance. The deepest curses and black magic incantations of the sorcerers, as well as the holiest blessings of the Living Buddhas, had failed to bring success to the raid. Because of the outcome the entire lower basin of the Tao

River Valley was made largely safe for travel, and the institution of Te-bu raids dwindled to insignificance. After the raid the Chinese took action and despatched a punitive expedition into Te-bu Land, and in the final settlement the missionaries, while being the second party in the pact, were able to act as mediators, not vengeful prosecutors, and thereby won much good will even in Te-bu Land.

The White Wolf raid—the wrath of man spreading disaster and desolation all around—came to the field, yet through dangers and trials the Mission went on with the work. Then the Te-bu raid struck at its very existence, and the wrath of more than man seemed evident, but the providence of God caused even that to turn to the furtherance of the Gospel, for truly in the years ahead, throughout all the history of this danger-haunted field, the wrath of man shall praise Him and the remainder of wrath will He restrain.

Chapter V

FOLLOWING the time of the White Wolf raid we come to the period of greatest expansion, when with minor exceptions, general conditions were peaceful and favorable to the prosecution of the work. The period began with the relief of escape from Chinese banditry and Tibetan hate, and closed with the general evacuation in the eventful days of 1927. It was marked by rapid development in the Chinese field, fresh advance in the Tibetan work, formal recognition of a special responsibility toward the Moslem population along the border, and the final emergence of the Chinese Church into a modified consciousness of its own entity.

The reports of the perils, losses, and heroisms of the White Wolf period stirred a new fervor and missionary interest in the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission, and quite a number of missionary recruits were added to the field force. It was now recognized that except as a matter of proximity, part of the field had nothing to do with the Tibetans, but was a region of opportunity for preaching the Gospel to a somewhat distinctive section of the great Chinese people. With this realistic conception of facts young men and women came out with no uncertainty of purpose and soon found a great sphere of service in the rapidly developing portion of the Chinese field.

On both the west and the east of Titao, Hochow and Kong Chang were occupied as main stations by the location of resident missionaries in each place, and with the growth of strong churches in both places the preponderance of balance in the Chinese work crossed the

Peh Ling Mountains. For in the wide strip of "white earth" country there are practically no open spaces, but terraced hillsides and closely cultivated valley bottoms make a continuous pattern of fields, and the villages that unobtrusively guard these fields, though seemingly small, in their aggregate make for hundreds of thousands of country people who since the dawn of history have lived and multiplied between the graves of yesterday and the fields of today, having never heard of the sure hope of a life in the hereafter.

In Kong Chang one young missionary life burned out in a short but intensive career that laid the foundation of a church which from its very beginnings had a special bias toward the indigenous church ideal. In Hochow the results of the early work were well utilized as a foundation on which one of the strongest churches on the field developed. And from the three main churches in the "blessed land" the Gospel reached out in blessing to a number of smaller centers and market towns.

Very early in the work the Christians asked for some sort of Christian education for their children, and so primary schools were established on each station. A Girls' School that had originally been in Taochow Old City before the days of the Chinese Revolution in 1912, was finally located in Minchow. In Titao in addition to the Bible School there was organized a boarding school for boys of Christian families. All this was but one aspect of the steady advance of the Gospel. From the tiny groups of four or five of the early days, the churches now had sizeable memberships, and in some of the districts yearly conversions were numbered by the score. Nor in the sudden expansion of the northern half of the field were the older stations for-

gotten. Again it seemed that the accumulated blessing of years was about to be poured out upon the field.

Yet always this field had been a field of intense conflict. When violence or disaster that threatened loss of life, had failed to break up the work, another diversion arose to prejudice the proper growth of the churches. The division that had appeared years before in the times of greatest blessing was now revived, when work of another organization which utterly ignored principles of mission comity, but claimed a personal ownership of the garnered results of the years, was launched in the field, purposely seeking to duplicate every station and setting itself to grow as much by proselytizing as by preaching the Gospel to the heathen. The results spread over years of misunderstanding and trial were disastrous for all. Malcontents fostered the trouble and it was inevitable that mistakes in charity should have been made on both sides. Ultimate right became so obscured by unfortunate occurrences that if it were not that the effect of that movement on the work as a whole was such an outstanding hindrance, that it must be noted it were better that no mention appear, for much of the feeling was later righted and Christian fellowship restored, though the work will bear the scars for years to come.

With the settlement of the affair of the Te-bu raid and attack, a new era began for Tibetan work, and trips of exploration were made in the upper Tao River basin and toward Labrang. The contacts of years of patience and fair dealing in Taochow Old City, and the sudden accession of prestige because of the outcome of the Te-bu raid, were some of the means God used to create a welcome for the missionaries in far places where for long there had been no welcome. Then the

sudden dominance of Moslem military might along the border—a rapid penetration of Tibetan country by the forces of law and order intent not on extending law and order as such, but on tapping the rich resources of Tibetan trade and wealth—opened Labrang, Hehtso, and Pao-an for missionary occupation.

Just after the close of the World War again there was a reinforcement of the Kansu-Tibetan Border field, this time by half a dozen young missionaries whole-heartedly committed to the doing of Tibetan work and Tibetan work only. Others had come before to do both Chinese and Tibetan work, but these were designated for strictly Tibetan work and forbidden the study of Chinese until such time as they had mastered the Tibetan language. Thus a new line of stations—Hehtso, Labrang, and Pao-an—was opened, each place having its own special significance.

Hehtso had been for years tantalizingly near Taochow Old City, yet the clans around the lamasery and trading post were surly and hostile. Again and again the missionaries had been forbidden access to it or the near-by lamasery of Mei-wu. Labrang had been a goal of missionary endeavor since the first visit in 1896, but it was not until 1919 that a place was finally rented in the trading post. The reopening of Pao-an brought to mind the defeat of the past, and the surprisingly quick response to the Gospel by the Chinese of the place encouraged the missionaries to go on to the lamasery of Rung-wo ten miles upstream from the border post.

In the summer of 1923 a band of Tibetan missionaries, following the example of that heroic Tibetan missionary, W. E. Simpson—since killed by Chinese bandits—made a trip of exploration, passing beyond

the border in a wide arc to visit Te-bu country, Lhamo, and Raja. At the latter place they crossed the Yellow River within sight of the magnificent snow peak of the Am-ne-machen. Later a trip was made to the independent principality of Ngawa some days west of the knee of the Yellow River. It was not altogether certain that the doors were open, yet the missionaries had been in; nor was it certain that there was a way, yet they had traveled along it, and with that travel there had come to the Mission knowledge of distant places—Denga, Lhamo, Shetsang, Raja, and Ngawa—once only known as names, but now known as places where the Gospel might, yes, *must* be preached. They had also heard such new names as Merge, Tsako, Peh Ing Si, and the tribal names of Goloks that now meant new objectives beyond the western horizon.

All that unknown land seemed calling to a new march beyond the old frontiers of missionary endeavor. And with that vision there came, in the interest of mission comity, a new arrangement with the other Mission on the border, and the unhealed wound of years was sutured by this understanding until time and fellowship might finally heal the breach. To cement this understanding, the Alliance, at much sacrifice, surrendered the newly-opened and greatly prospering work in Pao-an and Rungwo. This surrender also set free experinced missionaries for advance, and it was proposed to occupy Sungpan, some days south from Taochow Old City, as a base for advance into parts of the great new field.

For the first time in the history of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission, missionaries who had come out designated for Chinese work, and already well settled in the fruitful endeavor, under the urgency of the

greater need in the Tibetan field were permitted to change over into Tibetan work. In all the long weary years of waiting for the Tibetan field to open many missionaries in Tibetan work, because of pressing needs in the Chinese work and also because of the narrow opportunities in the Tibetan field, had changed to Chinese work, but never before had missionaries changed from the Chinese to the Tibetan field. Also under the burden of what seemed like multiplied opportunity, special seasons of agonizing intercession were set aside to pray that God's blessing might come, and that not only doors might be opened but that souls might be saved.

It was at this juncture that the Mission first took formal recognition of its responsibility toward the Moslems who in three distinct racial and lingual groups lived within the recognized limits of the field. In Taochow Old City and Hochow, much incidental work had been done among the followers of the Prophet. It had been long recognized that Moslem work required specialized equipment and effort, and especially in Kansu did certain language distributions make it necessary that some be appointed to give all their time to this work. So with the arrival on the field in 1924 of missionaries designated for this task, Moslem work was established as a distinct entity in the policy and endeavor of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission.

At about the beginning of this advance in the Tibetan work the attention of workers in the Chinese field was drawn to certain unoccupied areas in the northwestern part of Kansu—that panhandle or corridor that extends between Tibet and Mongolia toward the Jade Gate and Turkestan. A trip of exploration was made to the line of cities along the age-old Big Road

of Central Asia and plans were made to enter the field. Later, upon representations by another society that it was planning to enter the field, the Alliance gave up its claim, glad to go or give way that others might go. Missionary itineration also extended into the district along the Peh-lung-kiang southward toward the Sze-chuan border.

Toward the close of this period which ended in 1927, activity in the Chinese field was at its height. In addition to well-planned and intensively-carried-on work in all the stations and country districts, evangelistic bands toured the outlying sections and evangelized in the as yet unoccupied counties. These bands were composed of the pick of the Bible School students, for year by year, or every two years, there was graduated a new class of workers. In the station there were also organized special evangelistic campaigns that brought in many souls.

All of this heavily staffed work, involving evangelists, teachers, pastors' assistants, Bible women, and the members of the evangelistic bands, was almost entirely subsidized by the Mission. So it had been from the beginning, in spite of a slow persistent effort to foster giving in the churches, and place the local work on a progressively self-supporting basis. Yet year by year with expansion, the incubus of mission subsidy grew larger rather than smaller. Yet there were also growing indications that such an unhealthful state of affairs must end. In the accumulated experience of world-wide missions the ideal of an indigenous church had been born and that ideal was steadily winning its way. A partially self-supporting evangelistic band undertook the opening of work in a new country, and by a certain jealous independence pointed toward the growth of the

ideal of self-support, but more especially of self-government, in the minds of many. And in the matter of educational work a growing and jealous spirit of nationalism was already a fateful handwriting on the wall.

Amid such developments and such stirrings the period, unknown to all, was drawing to a close. In 1925 the shattered remnants of the armies of the so-called Christian General, Feng Yu Hsiang, took over the northwest. At first their heralded Christianity and the genuine piety of certain of the officers and men promised much for the field, but that promise was ill-fated. Russian and communist influence became increasingly evident, and in the spring the startling turn of events in central and eastern China brought about under consular orders the evacuation of the entire field force. They left the carrying on of the work in the hands of a hastily delegated native committee, and with much regret and the secret suspicion that they might not be able to return for a long time, if ever, the missionaries left for the coast.

Those that traveled to the railhead along the Big Road by cart passed through scenes of menace and at times actual danger, as they moved through a region dominated by a bitterly antiforeign soldiery, while those that floated down the Yellow River on rafts had to buy themselves free from detention by bandits, but all finally won through to the safety of the coast. Months later in the homeland they were free to wonder what the outcome of it all might be.

Chapter VI

GENERAL evacuation of the missionary force in 1927 did not mean the same break and cessation of work that it meant in 1900. The Gospel was strongly entrenched in points of vantage all along the border. There had come into being a Church that continued to function and grow. Though no missionaries were present, in no sense was the work at an utter standstill, nor was there an utter break in the history of the Mission. In two interrelated, parallel lines of action and policy events marched on to make the story of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission.

The Church as a whole had become definitely conscious of its existence as a separate entity as distinct from the Mission. For years this distinction had been painstakingly emphasized by the missionaries as they sought to build up the ideal of a fully self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating Church. Such a distinction was no mere academic sophism, but essential, and once accepted it logically followed that what was supported by the Mission was governed by the Mission and what was supported by the native Church was governed by the native Church. To have the Mission take a part in administering church funds, or the churches have a part in administering mission funds, were equally a dangerous disregard of principle and a flagrant violation of good sense.

General political conditions greatly favored the emergence of a one hundred per cent policy of full self-support, self-government, and self-propagation—the true indigenous Church. Nationalism was rampant. Xenophobia was stirring in all levels of Chinese life.

Mission propagation was the insidious propaganda of imperialism, Mission support was the tyranny of financial domination, and Mission government was arbitrary despotism among a free people. There was much talk of a unilateral revision of the unequal treaties. A strongly communistic government had been established in Hankow. The Northwest was dominated by a strangely half-Christian, half-communistic ideal, but whatever ideal was supreme it had little or no use for foreign missions.

The entire story of the change from the old status to the new, from heavy subsidizing to a policy that required no subsidy, is a long, complicated, yet interesting story of God's working and overruling throughout all of human frailty and weakness. It will be told more fully in a special chapter in the section wherein the different aspects of the Chinese work are treated topically. Here it is proper merely to record that within a few months after the missionaries had left, the general executive committee of the churches asked for full status as an entirely self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating Church.

At home the field force was going through its own particular adjustments. At first it had appeared certain that no one would be able to return to the field. That fact in itself emphasized the supreme importance of a truly indigenous church that could continue a witness of the truth. Also the ideal of the indigenous church had been growing in the hearts of the missionaries. Thus when they were gathered in New York, they decided that the request of the Chinese Church should be granted, and that making as liberal and generous arrangements in the financial details as possible the change should immediately be put into effect. This

constituted a drastic break with the past and with policy then current on Alliance mission fields.

One couple was sent to Central China to act as a liaison unit between the Board and the field. Then somewhat later the new needs and opportunities of both Tibetan and Moslem work was the basis of a decision to send back the Tibetan and Moslem workers, delaying the return of the workers in the Chinese field until such time as the Church had become firmly established in this new policy, and arrangements had been perfected for Mission and Church coöperation.

So it came about that in the fall of 1928, a party of twelve adults and five children started from Hankow to begin the missionary reoccupation of the Kansu-Tibetan Border. Facilities of communication had steadily improved through the years, until it took about one-third of the time it once took to reach the border. But in 1928, under the stress of civil war and a rebellious Moslem uprising of which no one seemed to know very much, those facilities had broken down. Instead of news about the Northwest, the party could only gather rather vague rumors. At one time it even seemed impossible to secure official permission to start on the journey. For weeks they waited for passports and finally left on a most negative sort of permission. They were not given official permission to go, but the consular ban was lifted.

Across a disrupted land, into a region of famine, pestilence, and desolation, through banditry and the constant menace of lawlessness, and finally into the camps and battlefields of the Mohammedan Rebellion of '28-'29, the missionaries made their return to the field. When they reached Kong Chang, coming through battle lines and freshly marked corpse-strewn battle-

THE DEVIL DANCE

The dancers wear masks of wild animals, and dance to the chants of lamas while subduing the evil spirits, which are chased into the effigy made of meal and butter in the center, which is later to be dissected and cast to the vultures outside the city. These dances occur in connection with three principal religious feasts a year.

WOMEN CARRYING WATER

In Tibet the women do the work, as here carrying water from the distant streams to the house. The men enjoy hunting and fighting, but as to work—that's the women's job!

fields, the party was held there for over three weeks in a city where disease and famine were already taking a terrible toll, until the roads were open enough that it might go on. Then three couples went on to Tao-chow Old City, to be robbed on the way and to reach that place just in time to go through the eighteen-day bandit occupation of the place, and to witness the destruction of the Tibetan villages. Later came the mass slaughter of some civilian population, and then the strain and uncertainty of the occupation of the town by the insolent Chinese soldiery. The other three couples going to Minchow arrived there just in time to go through somewhat similar experiences. So the winter passed. For weeks it was impossible even to know definitely what was taking place in the next county and all communication with the outside world was broken off.

Then in the spring one couple went to Labrang and another couple to Hochow there to go to the very gates of death from typhus, while the little two-year-old white child was cared for by the Chinese Christians. The rebellious Moslem army had gone to fight its way to the New Province and into a new position in national politics, but in Kansu the country-side was filled with indiscriminate violence. Banditry was rife. At any time one could never know when the lull would be broken by gunfire and the wail of the terror-stricken and the wounded.

Yet in all the confusion and chaos of that reoccupation, when practically no regular missionary work was done for months, two developments emerged to make it all seem worth while. First, for the Chinese Christians the arrival of the missionaries brought comfort and help. In the very darkest hour the missionaries

had come back, and in that return they not only brought encouragement, very real help in dealing with soldiery and the rebel leaders thereby saving many Christian lives, but for the supply of a growing terrible need they brought famine relief funds contributed by the membership of the Alliance constituency in America. Second, the very pressure of constant danger not only drove some of the missionaries to the well-recognized mission refuge of Luba Si, but as refugees they went on to new Tibetan country and found an asylum in Tibetan communities where except as refugees they would probably have been denied the right of residence. So as Mohammedan rebellion had driven the pioneers over thirty years before to come to Luba Si, now the threat of the Moslem sword sent the missionaries into Te-bu land and the Samtsa Rong region along the upper Tao River.

Especially after the utter and final destruction of Old City and the treacherous massacre of the greater part of its inhabitants by the Chone Prince in the summer of 1929 was this move into Tibetan country accelerated. With that destruction the traditional base station for the doing of Tibetan work had been eliminated. Luba Si took its place to only a limited degree, and as refugees fleeing with other refugees, the missionaries pioneered anew in far places in northeast Tibet. During the years following the reoccupation of the field, a new line of advance into Tibetan country marked by the stations of Denga and Lhamo was made a reality. As never before missionary itineration took the Gospel to the people of the black tents, the nomads of the open steppe, and a second visit to the kingdom of Ngawa revealed the fact that a door into that most promising field was slowly but surely opening.

On the Chinese side of the border the outstanding achievement of all those years was the final emergence of the South Kansu Church of Christ of The Christian and Missionary Alliance as a fully self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating entity. In all the discouragement and disillusionment of the years, when it seemingly was utterly harsh and almost useless, the Mission had nevertheless held the Church to the fulfillment of the request for full self-support made in 1927. During years of famine and disaster, with infinite patience and yet clear-eyed conviction, the chairman had held mission policy true to the basic ideals inherent in that first agreement, and the reward of that persistence was signalized in the holding in Titao in 1932 of the general reorganization conference of the Chinese Church.

With that step there came into existence a new relationship between the Mission and the newly organized Church. The missionaries found they had come to a unique opportunity of rendering a special service to the native Church such as they had never had before. At least they could become in reality the helpers of the Church, willing to help in evangelism, willing to render a spiritual ministry, but advising only by request; serving on committees only in an advisory capacity, yet more than ever bringing spiritual inspiration to the infant Church.

Something special had also been done to push work among the Moslems. One of the tragedies of the first massacre of the Taochow Old City people by the Chinese troops had been the killing of a Moslem and his entire family who a short time before had made public confession of faith in Jesus—not as prophet but as Saviour. It had seemed to presage a turning among

the Old City Moslems, but slaughter and destruction interrupted that movement. Yet a new station among the Salar Moslems was shortly afterward opened in Shun-hua.

Following this final settlement in the Chinese work, and the marked advance in both Tibetan and Moslem work, God gave peace to the land, that the advantage gained in times of turmoil and strife might be followed by the methodical industry only possible in times of peace. Again through the threatening storm of circumstance, the work had come into waters of comparative calm, to sail with even keel toward the promise of God's future.

Chapter VII

PEACE-TIME stories are short and sweet. In the two or three years of peace following the Reorganization Conference of 1932, the newly organized Chinese Church was slowly feeling its way through the problems of self-government, but gaining assurance with experience. Yet the power of the Gospel which had gone on bringing souls into the Kingdom, even when there was no organization and all around was in chaos, was still operative to overrule all the fumblings in policy and decision that inexperience occasioned, and year by year there was a steady increase in baptisms. The holding of an annual conference in each place which had been largely discontinued because of the troubles of preceeding years was revived.

In two things the new Church looked to the Mission for special help. The lady missionaries found a special field of service in doing children's and women's work, finding, too, that the newly organized Church not only coöperated most heartily, but actually begged for help along these lines of activity. Then the matter of the Bible School was revived. The last class had been graduated in 1927. In one way it seemed as though there was still almost an oversupply of men with Bible School training, yet the ministry is always a selective matter, and there was a new generation growing up in the churches, some of whom should become the leaders of tomorrow; so again the pros and cons of short-term courses versus long-term courses were discussed. It was evident that soon the Mission according to its declared policy would have to render assistance to the Church in training and preparing workers. Yet because the

status of workers and pastors in the indigenous church was still not altogether clear, and for fear that mission activity would again bring up the matter of mission subsidy to confuse the still-struggling churches, decision was deferred for a year or two.

In the entire problem one fact stood out with startling clarity. There was opportunity for doing pioneer preaching and for rendering a spiritual ministry to the churches that there had never been before. And in the doing of such work the coöperation of the churches in paying the expenses of volunteer lay workers and making appropriations in the local budgets for advance work showed that self-support had become real. Indeed, when the missionary's horse was fed out of the Conference expenses in local Conference it suggested the sort of self-support about which the Apostle Paul wrote.

Yet even victories as a truly indigenous Church, and a comforting increase year by year, was not the true measure of blessing for the Church. As in days gone by revival had come, so now the Church in a new and humble sense of need began to look to God for special blessing. In other parts of China some of God's servants, Chinese of great spiritual usefulness, were being used mightily, and the Church began to take council how to bring such a ministry to the field. But again warfare and trouble broke up all of ordered routine and made barely living a matter of difficulty.

But before we come to the tale of those days, we must remember that far away from that pleasant and fruitful land—fruitful now, too, in the harvesting of salvation—beyond the mountains that made a ragged skyline on the western and southern horizons, was another work where in stations over ten years old, to

points in the new line barely two or three years old, the battle was joined for the souls of Tibetans and the progress of the Gospel in that land.

For years the only Tibetan converts had been the few in the vicinity of Taochow Old City, Luba Si, and Chone. In all the new stations beginning with Labrang opened in 1919, there were no open believers from among the Tibetans. Years earlier, before the evacuation in 1927, there had been one who professed conversion in Hehtso who shortly afterward had been killed. For the rest, year by year in farmhouse, lamasery, tent, and campfire circles, the Gospel had been told again and again but the harvest was still long delayed. Year after year the missionaries, becoming more and more hardened to Tibetan life, ventured farther, living in all the stark discomfort of an utterly primitive existence and amid the ever-lurking dangers of a lawless land and people, found doors opening in all directions. There were many encouragements—lamas reading the Scriptures with deepest interest, souls under deep conviction, a general breakdown of their utter faith in their own religion, and many beginning to ask the question, "If I believe, what then?" Yet still no one came out and the missionaries went farther afield along Tibetan ways.

Then suddenly there were two or three open confessions of faith, and secret confessions by some others. The rumor traveled around that a break was coming, but before it could arrive disaster came to meet the missionaries who traveled Tibetan ways. Robbery, tribal warfare, night rides through robber-haunted territory, the threat of ambushment—all these were commonplace—but death came and took the most gifted of all the workers in the Tibetan field. Another couple

had to leave because of shattered health. Rumors thickened, but another soul was saved—surely the break was coming—but again sickness came, this time to the farthest outpost in Tibetan country, and the entire second line of advance was vacant. Again a victory had been won to keep the Gospel out of Tibet. But somewhere—and we wonder where—a battle in prayer and faith had been lost.

Yet even in Chinese country the lull and interval of peace was not for long. Peace has never lasted long on this danger-haunted field. A communist army that had been in southeast China for eight years, in months of marching and fighting passed across the breadth of China into Tibetan country, and then northward to threaten the field. Again evacuation orders went round. Many times in the years just gone the missionaries, by staying on and treating and bluffing with Moslem bandits, had been a tower of strength for the Christians, but with the communist army the missionaries would only be a source of embarrassment to the Chinese Christians who otherwise might hope to escape notice. Also the traditional refuge of Tibetan country was no longer effective. There, very likely, lay the route of the army's march, and so the missionaries gathered in the provincial capital to await developments. The Mission that occupied the provincial capital and the greater part of the province had already evacuated *en masse,* and after a number of weeks, as dangers thickened—the communists had come very near the border feeling their way and waiting for a chance to break t h r o u g h—the Mission, with the exception of one couple who stayed on by special arrangement with the military, securing a special guarantee of emergency transportation, was evacuated to the coast.

From the railhead in Sian to Lanchow, when the roads are free of bandits, busses now run on a four-day schedule and the Eurasia planes make the trip in three hours, but the roads were bad and the expense of a mass evacuation by air was not to be thought of. So again the missionaries floated down the Yellow River on rafts, being nearly wrecked in the rapids and wondering fearfully about bandits in dangerous Mongolian country, and were greatly relieved to reach Paoteo and later Peiping where they spent the winter.

The following spring the force in relays returned to the field to find the work going on with much blessing. Only in Tibetan country had here been trouble, and there disaffected Te-bus had looted and burned the mission compound in Denga; so only the unoccupied but still existent station of Lhamo marked the spearhead of missionary advance into northeast Tibet. The missionaries were barely settled when the long-heralded march of the communists took place, and on short notice of just a few hours the missionaries had to leave the field and take refuge in Lanchow. This time Minchow was beseiged for fifty-four days, and the districts of Taochow Old City, Taochow New City, and Minchow suffered terribly. For the missionaries in Lanchow the reports the government bombers brought back day by day was the only news they had of that part of the field. Yet after the invasion passed the work went on. The Christians had lost much, the districts were devastated, yet there were stories of marvelous deliverances, the churches continued to function, conferences were held, and the yearly baptism continued. Opportunities for service had multiplied.

In addition to routine work one long trip of itineration was taken into Golok country, a special conference

of the Chinese Church was blessed under the ministry of one of China's great evangelists, and with such matters the chronical of over forty years is brought down to the present. A great war is on, but in the far Northwest there are only rumors and the restrictive instructions of the consular authorities, yet always some sort of trouble may develop. Indeed, it has developed in a *coup d'etat* in which the Chone Prince was murdered, and the border resounds to the war-like motions of the restless Tibetans. Yet the missionaries stay on for trouble and warfare, rumors and disaster, are after all the normal condition of life on the Kansu-Tibetan Border. There is a great work which must yet be done among Chinese, Moslems, and Tibetans in a region that now more than ever promises to be a gateway into Tibet, for invitations to Lhasa have been received and the caravan route into inner Tibet is surely becoming a highway for the Gospel.

PART III

THE CHINESE FIELD AND WORK

The progress of God's working is not merely a matter of chronology but of interlocking, interrelated factors and aspects of development. So the picture of the birth, growth, and incipient maturity of the Chinese Church on the Kansu-Tibetan Border must be painted apart from the graph-like regularities of time-tables and the sequence of events.

From among the sturdy conservative Chinese peoples of the Border and near-Border regions, and out of the womb of false and hoary faiths, the workings of the Spirit of God and the travail of His servants brought through the pangs of rebirth a Church of lively promise. As an over-anxious wet nurse, the Mission coddled for long periods an infant that should have walked, but from the comforting arms of the nurse still refused to crawl, and the season of its maturity was long overdue. Yet God's providence worked on, until through tribulation and trouble the Chinese Church of Christ of The Christian and Missionary Alliance of South Kansu now walks the ways of faith and obedience, and the one-time nurse has become a respected older partner in winning new ground and more souls for a common, glorious Lord.

This is the story of the emergence of an indigenous Church from the work of The Christian and Missionary Alliance on the Kansu-Tibetan Border.

PART III

THE CHINESE FIELD AND WORK

The Border Region and Christian Gatherings
Titao and Evangelism
Hochow and Outstation Work
Kong Chang and Women's Work
Schools
Colporteurs and Evangelistic Bands
The Indigenous Church

Chapter I

THE Chinese of the border communities—Taochow Old City, Taochow New City, Chone, and Minchow—have much in common in that their habits of life, and more especially their religious beliefs and practices, have been greatly affected by contact with the Tibetans and whatever aboriginal peoples once lived in this region. The hard-headed materialism of the normal Chinese outlook has been modified by the fears and superstitions of Shamanism and fired by the mysticism and fanatical zeal of Buddhism. The restrained worship of Heaven and the demigods of Chinese history, and the dutiful veneration of ancestral tablets that contains nearly as much of the pride of lineage as true worship, are here changed into a sort of religious frenzy, and at festival times demon-possession and manifestations of the occult are common. For many the prayer wheel and rosary have been imported from across the border, and religious societies such as the Huang Hsiang Huei and Mani Huei are well organized and liberally supported by their devotees. Such organizations conduct the seasonal celebration of the idol fesivals and hold the loyalty and allegiance of hundreds.

The purely Chinese ideal of *hsing shan* (doing good), the outgrowth of a practical code of ethics, is superseded by the more estoric and mystical practice of *nien ching* (entoning sacred writings). For many, especially the aged, the vain repetition of hopeless, meaningless prayers—syllables that have sense in neither the original nor in translation—constitutes an endless task that starts between cockcrow and dawn, and only ends

when late at night the tiny oil lamps finally have been snuffed by sleepy fingers. In some mysterious way that strange jargon of mutilated Sanskrit syllables is regarded as being efficacious for the alleviation of all the mounting ills of human existence, and powerful to change the inexorable laws of rewards and punishments that to sin-guilty consciences make of the hereafter a doleful state of uncertainty and anguish.

The morals of the border communities are also on a much lower par than the ideal or even the practice of much of Chinese living. At least the restraining influence of convention is largely nullified by a semibarbarous freedom. As is usually the case, fervid idolatry is joined with immorality. Thus religious fervor and much of open sin are united in open resistance to the Gospel. Yet in the greater friendliness of these border peoples the missionaries found a way of approach and an open door for the Gospel. Still linked by history and association with a barbarian heritage and barbarous, un-Chinese habits of life, they had less contempt for the barbarians from beyond the seas; and there was less of natural prejudice to hinder a fruitful hearing of God's truth. More than anywhere else in the Chinese part of the Kansu-Tibetan Border field the people are friendly and approachable.

The Gospel came to these peoples as the power of God unto salvation. The name of Jesus whispered in faith drove demon influence and demon individuality from out the gloomy recesses of hearts and minds horror-haunted. It cleansed and filled with joy and faith those once darkened souls. It lifted the fear of the grave and the hereafter from aged hearts, and placed intelligent, hopeful prayer and song on lips that had been burdened with meaningless and vain repetitions.

It broke the bondage of the opium pipe and brought clean living and speaking into communities that had festered with sin and rottenness. And it placed its mark and laid its claims on representatives from all the levels of society. Some few there were of scholars and business men that turned to the Lord. But mostly the Christians were gathered from humbler walks of life, not from the dregs of human existence, but from the sturdy independent peasantry and artisan farmers that tilled little fields and followed trades according to the season and the demand.

Such were they who came for trade to the markets held at stated times, and stopped to listen at some corner, bookstand, or wide-open preaching shop. There above the noisy argument and haggling of Eastern buying and selling they heard of salvation that was not dearly bought by merit painfully performed, but was a free gift to be thankfully received. For those that could read there were tracts and Scripture portions, and later contacts brought the missionaries, in ox-carts or on horseback, to visit village homes. And while the menfolk gathered on a threshing floor, or were grouped in the sunny lee of the village homestead to listen to a more detailed telling of Good News, the white ladies brought a strange new story to the womenfolk of the home as they tended the fire and prepared the evening meal. And dumb drudges, who had almost come to believe they had no souls, learned of God's love for their souls in terms that brought tears to their eyes and new joy and peace to their hearts.

The work which came out of such beginnings, more than in any other part of the field, has experienced waves of revival blessing. In one village the Christians built their own church in a community that was

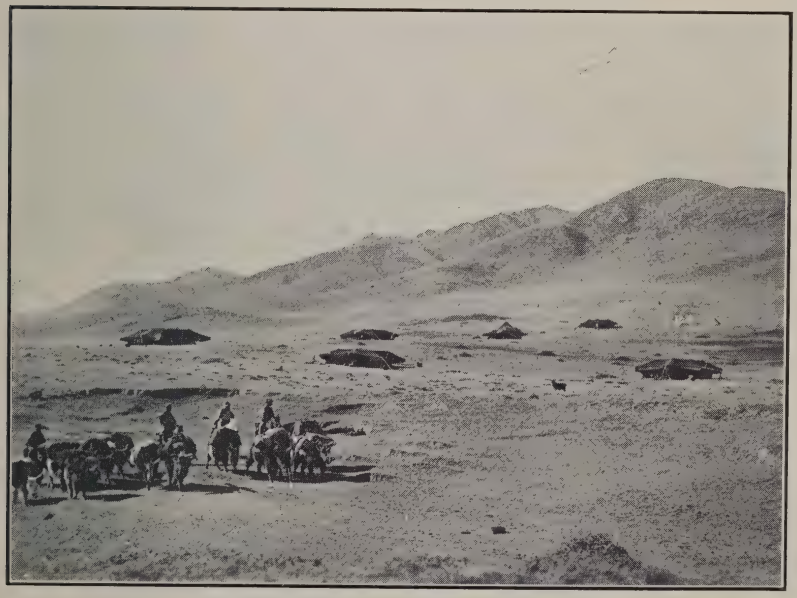
salted down with Christian faith and practice. That church of Chu-an was on the way years ago to be the nucleus of a truly Christian village. But more than any portion of the field this region has suffered both from the effects of schism and all the ills that follow community disaster. By all the influences of their superstitious, mystical, demon-haunted background these Christians were most prone to spiritual delusion and spiritual excess. By all the ties of earliest association they most naturally responded to the fiercely competitive influences that followed the division over the question of "tongues." So because of that difference, much growth and progress was arrested while churches, families, and dearest Christian friends, were divided by that fruitless contention wherein charity so often had no part.

That region more than any other has suffered also from the recurrent disasters of civil warfare and its attendant violence. White Wolf devastated Minchow and Taochow New City and destroyed Taochow Old City. In the Mohammedan Rebellion of 1928-1931, Chone and Taochow Old City were utterly destroyed, and the whole region was ravaged and plundered until entire villages were depopulated and entire populations rendered houseless and homeless. Sometimes the people were killed but the killers had no time to fire the houses, and sometimes the inhabitants escaped to hide in the hills while their homes bore the brunt of the destroyers' fury. And finally the communist invasion of 1936-1937 devastated the entire region afresh, and in the fifty-four day siege of Minchow half of that city was destroyed.

Again and again the Christians have been harried and driven from hiding-place to hiding-place. Com-

Tibetan woman milking the yak.

Tibetan nomad woman weaving yak's hair cloth.



YAK HAIR TENTS

The Tibetan nomads camp for two or three weeks and then move on in search of fresh pastures, beginning in the spring in the lowlands and then climbing higher and higher until they gain an altitude of about 12,000 feet, when they begin their descent.

munities and homes have been broken up, parents and children separated for months. The smallest gatherings for worship have been suspended perforce, the church buildings have been destroyed, and amid general ruin each one fled and hid as best he might. Yet always with the lull and furtive resumption of normal living which centered around the imperatives of seed-time and harvest, and drawn by the love of a common Lord, the Christians—sometimes quite leaderless until the oldest or the boldest took the lead—assembled for worship, praise, and prayer. Stripped of all but the clothes they stood in, half starved by the refugee diet of thin gruel and boiled nettles and weeds, and knowing not what would keep them till next harvest, they could only cry to God. And the stories of their deliverances and providences would fill a book, as the faith of those who name His name was tested and tempered in a sevenfold furnace.

Still the work goes on, now entirely on a self-supporting basis, and half-time and self-supporting pastors minister to the scattered groups of believers. In the fall of the year, when harvest labor and the toil of the threshing floors piled high with grain are ended, without fail the yearly Conference of the Church is held. Firewood and provisions, provided by offerings —many of them in kind—are made ready. And dried stable cleanings are stored for lavish use in the ample firing of the earthwork platforms that are heated by the slowly smoldering smudge of such smoky burnings. Then the Christian men and women, boys and girls gather for the yearly Conference. The days are already chilly and the nights frosty with the early cold of winter; but with wadded garments, a heated *K'ang* or earthwork platform for sleeping quarters, and tiny

charcoal fires for toasting the fingers, the hardy folk of Kansu are well content, for they are come to the annual *chu-huei*. Pastor Keo, Chinese chairman of the field, is there to expound God's truth, and Heo-si-fu to pray for any who may be sick, while the much-loved foreign pastor will tell with a tongue that sometimes skips and slips among the changing tones of a sing-song speech, but with easily understood love and yearning, of the love of the Lord. Between cockcrow and dawn the day begins with prayer, and meal times and service periods alternate with a slow, clockless rhythm until late at night, when those who know how to read crowd close around the tiny open wick lamp, to learn some new hymn, while the others catch and store in their memories the repeated refrain.

Of those that come faces stand out—each face telling of God's grace and power. Su-Ta, wealthy merchant, stuttering slightly—always business-like and much in demand when business transactions are carried on, yet with a countenance that forgets all of a trader's shrewdness in open-faced delight when God's truth is preached. Su-Ta, who because he has two wives—having them when he was saved—can never have a place of leadership in the Church, yet who is willing to do the work and carry the burdens and let others have the credit and honor that the Church may grow and a witness be maintained. Heo-si-fu, a scholar farmer, who gives his time and talents without remuneration in serving a half-Tibetan church and prays for the sick with such faith—a faith well grounded, for many have been healed through his prayers. Ching-Ie, a steadfast soul of tireless witness from a little hamlet in the Chone district—Ching-Ie, who has had much persecution that has but deepened his joy. And if the

Conference is in the Minchow district, there are the faces of those women that so faithfully give of money and time to country work and witnessing. And the face of Wang, the deacon whose life is a shining testimony—his son a scholar and a teacher worshiping with him. These are but a few of the scores that come to the annual *chu-huei* to worship and find God's blessing. And at every such gathering there are those who are examined and admitted as candidates for baptism and church fellowship.

The year is a lull between impending disasters. Life is insecure and man on the Kansu-Tibetan Border is surely born to trouble. But with harvest and bare shelter, and for the *chu-huei* the luxury of a bit of white flour and the unfamiliar taste of meat in the noodles, this with warm beds and fellowship, make for bodily well-being. But most of all, their souls are warmed with the glow of God's love shed abroad in all hearts, and filled with the satisfying portion of His truth. Praise God for the annual *chu-huei* where Christians gathering amid the fearful memories of past disaster, and having the uneasy assurance that such things must needs be until the Lord returns, may yet praise and pray, singing as they gather close around the tiny lamp,

"The Lord gives me peace
The Lord gives me peace
The peace the Lord gives is not like earthly blessing."

Chapter II

THE shrines may be full of effigies newly risen from a Buddhist hell, the women folk may light tapers and incense sticks before the goddess Kuan-yin, and the backwoods folk of the border may learn Tibetan prayers and dream of Buddhistic rebirths, but the true Chinese prefers to think of life from the vantage point of the "princely one" whom Confucius defined over two thousand years ago in terms of decorousness, propriety, and rectitude.

So as the "princely one" the typical Chinese forms his life on a model that two thousand years ago was already hoary and ancient. So he walks with long-gowned elegance, folding his hands and bowing with the anxious bend Confucius recommends. So, too, he ignores womenfolk and holds the four generations of the patriarchal household to enforced unity in a convention that fosters but cannot cure the jealousies and hates of family troubles pyramided on three generations. So, too, he talks much of benevolence, righteousness, and propriety—does not Kung the master say, "To recognize righteousness and not to perform is dastardly"? In all the compromises of the doctrine of the mean he argues too about the ultimate nature of the philosophic concept of *tao* (truth), or the way of the first principle, again quoting Kung the master, "The way of the first principles is not to be lightly forsaken."

Yet for such an one prayer is superstition, the spirit-world forbidden speculation, the hereafter a vague hypothesis that has no bearing on present conduct, and worship unwarranted presumption bordering on foolishness. Only veneration to the spirits of the ances-

tors—offerings on the graves at Ching-ming and incense burnings and genuflexions before the ancestral tablets—is enjoined or permitted the princely one. Such ideals and teachings, powerful with weight of antiquity, make for convention, politeness, and adherence to the forms of rectitude; but they also permit of hypocracy, heartlessness, pride, and utter present-worldliness. Yet most of all it makes for hatred of change and a proud scorn of anyone or anything from the outside world.

This is the true genesis of the spirit of the people who live in the Titao district—that thickly populated region in the "blessed land," north of the Peh-ling. And to such a people came the Gospel and the forces of change—change of heart and change of all the habits of thought and life. Even in the days of thirty years ago, this grey and dusty city that lies in the valley bottom primly foursquare was a center of learning and old-fashioned tradition. And as learning was the old-time ladder to official position and preferment, so the families of Titao had sons and husbands as high officials in far places where they were men of might and prestige. Even after modern learning came to the city, and the sons and grandsons of the scholars of a bygone tradition had learned in normal school and college, the language and thoughts of a modern world, their basic outlook was little changed. The nebular hypothesis, the evolutionary hypothesis, and half a dozen other hypotheses of materialistic philosophy all combined to push the thought of God even farther than Kung the master had pushed Him when he refused to pray.

But for these intellectuals there also came the pangs of sorrow, the disrupting power of hate, and the deadly

bondage of habit-forming sin, when the opium pipe, the wine cup, or the dice proved too strong for Confucian ethics, or the self-sufficiency of behavorism. So again they would ask, "What is truth?" And above all else, what is *tao,* that way of the first principle which should be the genuine solution of all life's problems? And asking that some came to read in a strange new book, "In the beginning was *tao,* and *tao* was with God, and *tao* was God" — and later even stranger words, "I am *tao,* the truth, and the life."

The women folk worshiped somewhat hysterically at half-neglected altars, the common people enjoyed the excitement of the idol festivals, and in a sort of superstitious fear year by year renewed the houshold door and kitchen gods. Yet on the whole, the power of the old gods was already dead in the lives of the common people, and only a fearful curiosity about the hereafter mitigated their whole-hearted absorption in the concerns of this life But where the dark power of forgotten gods might wane and cease, and even the hereafter seem far away, sin entered into the affairs of today and ruined the best prospects of this life. But for such as would accept—whether scholars, farmers, merchants, or artisans — the Gospel was indeed the power of God unto salvation—even salvation from the power of sin—dice, winecup, or harlot evil.

First a scholar accepted Christ, then some carpenters, then a farmer from the country. And as the men turned from utter absorption with the things of this life, to thoughts of the life to come, so the women turned from the service of shrines and altars to the worship of the true and living God. That was the beginning of the Church in Titao. Titao was where the Bible School was located and will be located again.

Titao was the headquarters station of the Mission. Titao was where half the schools of the Mission were at one time located, but our true concern is with the Church of Titao and our story the story of its growth. Country itineration, visiting, street-preaching, and chapel work—all had a part in bringing the knowledge of *tao*—the way of the first principle and the solution for all the problems of life in the person of the living, loving Saviour—to the people of Titao, lost in the wilds of their own arrogance. Because of the peculiar conditions of work in this city and district of convention and pride, and because of the noteworthy talents and gifts of church leaders and church workers won from a hard-headed, clear-thinking people, two forms of endeavor have been richly blessed.

Facing the busy thoroughfare like one of the many shops which line the Stone Bridge street, the women's gospel shop offers rest and shelter to the women who pass. In spite of high-souled, modern reform, Titao is still the region where the women hobble on "lily feet," the horribly mutilated stumps that foot binding leaves. So the women folk—stout country bodies or city ladies—that roam the streets in the brief permitted periods of freedom during the festival times, for all their enjoyment must often rest. And for the proper women folk of Titao that must be where no men folk are. For such the benches of the women's preaching shop are a haven of rest, and coming again and again without being liable to the charge of being improper they here may listen to the Gospel told by missionary ladies and earnest Christian women with joy in their hearts and a loving message on their lips. From that place the Good News has been spread to distant places by gladdened souls whose cramped and

hobbling "lily feet," instead of hastening to gossip and curse, have been shod gloriously anew with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. So the women's preaching shop, and the tireless witness of which it has been a part, has been blessed to the salvation of many women in the district.

As a complement to this women's preaching shop witness, whenever conditions within the Church or in the general life and activities of the community so warrant, special evangelistic services are held throughout the year. Street chapel witness, open-air preaching to the crowds in the open forum that is in session all day long in front of the magistrate's *yamen,* the sale of Scriptures, country evangelism, and house-to-house visitation, all lead up to evangelistic campaigns when the church is opened for evening services. During the New Year's season, and more especially during the Lantern Festival, the streets are filled with crowds commemorating the passing of the old year and the coming of the new; and these crowds come to hear the proclamation of a new way to a new life that fits one and all for a new destiny.

Titao as a place of somewhat urban culture has more of night life than the more provincial places along the border. The streets have as yet no lamps, but big paper lanterns bob through the dark, announcing to all that the owners, whose names are, in all propriety, plainly written on the outside, are out on legitimate business. There are also those who hide their identity, carrying lanterns that show the ideographs of peace or righteousness, but give no clue as to who the owners are. And in the dark, without any lights, still others slip furtively through alleys and into darkened doorways, loving darkness because their deeds are evil. But

the church doors are open to all. Singing at the street corners, and dodgers passed from shop to shop, have well advertised the time and place, and little by little the church is filled. Some who come are men who sit in the darker corners hiding their faces, for by day they are too proud of position, prestige, or reputation to listen, yet at night like Nicodemus they hear of birth anew.

Not that the Gospel has not been worthily presented. Being all things to all men, the missionaries have taught classes in the Normal School, that the intellect and culture of the time and region might hear of the wisdom of God. And during times of disaster and peril, the mission station has been a refuge and a hospital for the terror-stricken and the wounded, while the foreigners not only directed Red Cross activities but were instrumental in negotiating settlements and peace. So the cause of Christ has a worthy place in the life of the city. But the true appeal of God's truth rings out in the Chinese hymn sung with minor quavers and falsetto obligatoes:

"Ye born of the same mother, come hear Good News,
Salvation's great doctrine is basic logic,
Jesus acts as mediator."

A true Chinese appeal to the clear-head, straight-thinking Chinese people—an appeal that magnifies the Word—*tao,* the way of the first principle—that was made flesh and dwelt among us.

The sacrifices of a blind beggar family of Christians, the planning and purpose of Christian business men and artisans, are back of these efforts to reach the people of their own city; and the appeal that is given night after night in Chinese eloquence is by church

leaders and workers who in all their zeal and love represent what Christ can do for scholars and literati—the best the traditions and culture of Titao can produce. And when the Spirit of God moves the crowds toward salvation all rejoice in the salvation of their own.

From the central church the truth has spread throughout the district. Eighty *li* away to the southeast, the Kuan-pu group of Christians have their own pastor. Ninety *li* to the southwest the truly indigenous gathering of Christians in Ching-ku-cheng began with the salvation of one old lady, a grandmother of wealth and position, who worked and witnessed until a Church met in her country home. In the east country at Heh-shi-wan four generations of the Wang family have just about made their village entirely Christian. And so throughout the district, in Hsin-tien-pu, Cheng-chia-tsui, Hsing-p'ing, and many another place the conversion of some hardly-won soul has been the beginning of individual salvation for others who have been won from worship at either the crumbling altars of ancient, decadent faiths or from the no less false but newly decorated high places of agnosticism and unbelief.

The saving faith of Jesus has come to the city and district of Titao and now grows and spreads, not as the foreigners' doctrine, but as a belief which is heavenly in origin but just as truly Chinese in expression and practice.

Chapter III

THE City of Hochow, one hundred and eighty *li* west of Titao, and also located north of the Peh-ling, is not only the center of a great district but represents a peculiar twofold aspect of Alliance responsibility. Within the well-kept wall, the City of Hochow is Chinese, without, the suburb is Mohommedan; and alternately in a strange, irregular pattern Chinese and Mohammedan villages and communities make up the countryside. Only in the most incidental way do they ever mix. In everything of fundamental significance, something deeply irreconcilable keeps them apart. Even though the general use of Chinese is a common denominator in the equation of relationship for much of the population, mission effort that strives to reach both Chinese and Mohammedans at the same time is sure to become badly compromised by their mutual jealousies, suspicions, and hatreds. So the problem of Moslem work in Hochow and its outlying district is a story separate from the narrative of the progress of the Gospel and the formation of the existent Chinese Church among the Chinese of that same region.

Yet close association has left its mark on the Chinese of the district. In hardihood and resolution they may not equal the followers of the Prophet but they far outrival other Chinese, and wherever Chinese armies march —on the fringes of what was once the Empire or to bolster the might of the present central government— there as officers and leaders are found the hardy sons of Hochow. Something of the antagonistic pressure of Moslem hatred toward idolatry has intensified the

devotion of the Hochow Chinese for the shrines, altars, and spirit tablets to their ancestors and ancestors' gods. For many this has become the badge of racial loyalty and the insignia of a steadfast resistance to Islam.

In 1901 the first Christians of the Kansu-Tibetan Border field, the Cheo chia — three of whom were saved as they lived the life of refugees in Minchow— returned to the site of the family homestead in a village of the Hochow district, and there took up the toilsome lot and hard-earned qualified security of poor farmers. After Titao was opened missionary visits were made to this village and the truth was witnessed in the city of Hochow itself. It was preached to Moslems and Chinese alike, and the incidents of that early work were linked with both those peoples. Once Moslem mobs threatened the missionary, and the next day the great Moslem leader, Ma An Liang, in person escorted his missionary caller to the street gate of the great *yamen,* there in the sight of his coreligionists to bow polite farewells. After that Moslem mobs gathered no more, but none the less effectively the Gospel was boycotted by the Moslem religious leaders.

Later, on a summer's day, the first baptismal service was held and Wu Lao Ie, an official of some position and power, was among those who entered the swift waters of the Hsia River to witness their confession. For years an occasional visit by the missionary of the Titao district was all that could be given to the work but under native leadership and testimony it continued to prosper. Then about twenty years ago it was finally occupied by missionaries and with energetic and systematic prosecution of work, the Church grew apace.

That Church is not an organization centered around either a building or an institution but under the leader-

ship of Pastor Wang, is a band centered around the Lord who sought and won them in all their different walks and conditions. Wang Ioh Seh, himself, in 1925 the youngest graduate of the Bible School class for that year, has grown to leadership and in leadership with his people. He is the truest kind of a pastor. Then there is Deacon Chao, a hard-headed business man who proves his God in all the exigencies of the market as well as the home. As a link with the past another one of those that gather for worship is the youngest son of those first converts of years ago, the Cheo family. And his brother-in-law is one of those who as Tung Fu Hsiang's Kansu braves, in 1900, marched to drive the foreigners into the sea, or at least to kill all who were called by the very name he now owns as Lord. And among the women there are those like Mrs. Hsiong, whose faith and zeal are indeed as a burning lamp in the dark heathen homes into which she goes. And most encouraging of all in this Church there are many fine examples of second generation Christians—young men who serve their fathers' God with added zeal, taking a Christian testimony into the long venerated calling of teaching, or into the newly dignified profession of doctoring.

The Hochow district has suffered from war and rebellion and recurrent banditry almost as much as the border regions south of the mountains. For months the Christians endured the siege of Hochow by the Moslem rebels during the summer of 1928, never knowing what day might be the last of the defense. The garrison of the city was composed of the ruthless Kuo Ming Chuin, the so-called peoples' army, whose policy is best summed up by the illustrated text they left on the official bulletin board when they finally de-

parted. Under the picture of a raven about to take wing from off a withered branch were written the words, "The branch is stripped, the tree is dead; time to take flight." And the memory of their callousness was written deep in many hearts by a hundred and one acts of oppression.

At the same time the Christian family of Wang Da Wei was going through the siege of Ningho, and though that little fortress city held out against overwhelming odds, death from famine or disease piled the streets with corpses. All the other occupants of the residential courtyard died of typhus or starvation, but Wang Da Wei and family were under the shadow of the Almighty and lived to praise the name of their God. So in the Church of Hochow the power of the Gospel has been proven in the lives of a hard-bitten people who would have nothing but reality.

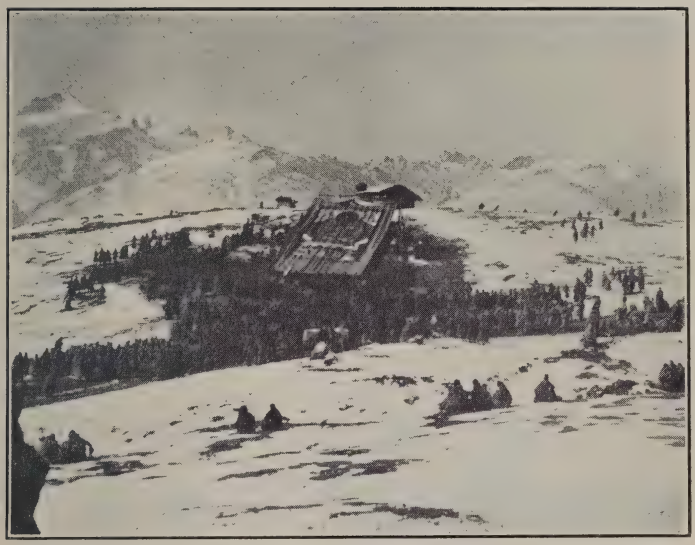
The final establishment of the Church on a truly indigenous basis, which in Hochow has been most happily effective, has released missionary effort for evangelistic work in the district. Once it was all one county, but now has been divided into five, and at least three of the new county seats challenge faith and sacrifice to effect an entrance. The routine of opening an outstation is not something of merely mechanical procedure. The start is a matter of going to a Chinese inn with bare travel equipment packed on one or two horses or mules and taking up residence in such an inn. But do not let that word which directs the tourist to many a pleasant hostel along the ribbon highways of the homeland mislead you. This inn is a series of rooms alternating or combined with stables around a court of overpowering filth and odors. Of that room the floor, walls, and platform for sleeping are all of

earth, hard and worn but ever dusty. The paper of the latticed windows is ragged and full of holes, the doors are only closed with considerable labor at night, and the platform on which the bedding is spread and where the missionary sits and sleeps harbors a numerous and assorted insect population. Such is the comfort, and for the experienced the true comfort, of a Chinese inn room which is sleeping quarters, living quarters, and preaching place; for the idle and curious come there all day long. And after the visiting in homes and preaching in the market place has been done. here and there in the intently staring ring of faces there begin to appear the faces of those who have come to ask more about the "Jesus doctrine," and ask for the books that talk of that way. In this way the truth first comes to a place where there has never been a witness.

But only when believers are gathered and a nucleus has been formed can it be considered as having been really opened for the Gospel. That may take place only after many trips and many week-long stays under the dingy, smoke-blackened roof of a Chinese inn. Every market town, every large village, every hamlet even, is a continuing challenge until such work is finished and evangelization is complete.

Yet the Mission is no longer alone nor is the missionary singlehanded. Volunteers from the churches and the church leaders and workers share the burdens and help bear the brunt of itineration and pioneer advance. Their counsels guard from mistake and keep the missionary from falling into the innumerable pitfalls that await the all too credulous and unwary Westerner. In the responses that the Gospel wins, their racial self-knowledge discerns between the true and the

false, for after all it is their work and not simply the work of the Mission. On this basis coöperation between the Mission and the Church has its most ideal expression in the work carried on in the Hochow district. And even for that special work among the Moslems, Christian love for what were once their hereditary enemies has constrained the Chinese Church, members and leaders, to undertake a part in prayer and effort of that which, for them is the beginning of true missionary work.



SUNNING THE SILKEN BUDDHA

Tibetans of the Lhamo District honoring Hsiam-ba, the "Coming Buddha," who is expected to usher in the kingdom of love.

TIBETANS OF THE LABRANG DISTRICT

Dressed in their "Sunday best," as they appear at their religious festivals.

Chapter IV

IN THE Kansu-Tibetan Border field the most advanced activity of the indigenous Church has much that is lacking not only in being unable to carry the main burden of pioneer evangelism but even in being unable to maintain a well rounded program within the church. Most of all women's work and children's work are bound to suffer. Chinese convention and the social inhibitions inherited from the past still prohibit or greatly hamper social intercourse between the sexes. Thus for the women folk much of a pastor's care and ministration are ruled out, and where there is no special provision to supply that lack, the women's work both that within the church and that for the unsaved, suffers accordingly. Children's work is closely related to the same problem, and even where churches are seeking actively to remedy the situation, home and social conditions make it hard to meet the need.

Thus in addition to other interesting aspects of the work in Kong Chang, it is the one place on the field where a distinct and specialized program of mission assistance in the doing of women's and children's work is being carried out.

This city, about two hundred *li* east of Titao, is also in the "blessed land," and in the days of the Manchu dynasty was the most important of all the cities of the field, ranking as a prefect city. Yet much of the land within the extensive city walls and multiple suburbs is bare of buildings. The place was opened as an outstation from Titao soon after that city was occupied, and has only had a resident missionary for a comparatively short period of time. The people of the

district are as truly Chinese as those of Titao, yet for some strange reason the district has been the scene of what might be called an attempted revival of heathenism—not the mysticism of contemplative Buddhism, or an intellectual admiration for the ethical content of the teachings of Kung, the master, but a revival of all the idolatrous mummery that calls itself Taoism. Nowhere in all the field are the door and kitchen gods honored as carefully, for nowhere has polytheistic heathenism as strong a hold on the faith and devotion of the people.

After having been worked as an outstation from Titao for some time, years ago a young missionary went to Kong Chang and began a work that from the very beginning had the distinctive emphasis of self-propagation like a seal upon it. With burning zeal he literally wore himself out in a few years but left a work that under the direction of a Christian father and son has continued to grow and prosper. The father, the patriarch of all the Christians on the field, was a tireless and faithful shepherd of the flock. Now as he is over ninety years of age there is little that he can do, but his presence is a benediction. And the real burden of the pastoral work is carried on by a regularly appointed full-time pastor who was called from another part of the field by the church.

The country work of the Kong Chang district has flourished to an unusual degree. And though the county has had its full share of banditry, and more than its full share of famine, the Christians have again and again proved God in all their troubles. These scattered groups of believers are the advance guard into heathenism in unoccupied areas all around and by their witness and invitation they make a way for the coming of the truth.

It is in Kong chang that a most interesting problem in coöperation between the local church and the Mission is being worked out. Two single ladies are stationed there to specialize in women's and children's work in coöperation with the church. In the matter of organization they have no controlling voice in determining church policy and are only supposed to work in harmony with the church workers in covering the city by house-to-house visitation, in the going of country work among the women, and in arranging classes and meetings for the women of the church. Yet actually by the weight of their influence and by the sheer power of spiritual leadership they have been a great blessing to the Church as a whole. It has not been easy. Occasional trouble between two factions in church affairs has necessitated a most scrupulous neutrality but God has blessed that same carefulness.

Yet their most important work has been that done throughout the district. Of all work, country work takes one with little or no mitigation, farthest down into all the harsh realities of Chinese life. It begins with the matter of transport—a bumping cart, stumbling donkeys, or some overloaded horse, and by such means the miles are slowly measured in drifting winter dust, or at an even slower rate when summer rains have changed the roads into muddy ditches. Though occasional stops in inns must be made it is better for propriety's sake and for the sake of reaching the women folk to stop if possible in some home—maybe a Christian home or one where Christian influence has secured a welcome for the missionary.

The stark realities of existence in a Chinese hamlet can only be known by experience but the total of those realities is full of discomfort and even menace to

health. No preparation known to the land will prevent chilblains from the alternating bitter cold and the baking heat of the almost stove-like *kangs* on which one must sit and sleep. Rest in the bosom of the family from a multitude of causes—many of them hopping or crawling ones—is an uneasy nightmare, and the days are one endless visit, service, and free exhibition in which one is always the center of attention—the main attraction from dawn till the last dimly-lit hour before bedtime. The food, though it is the very best the countryman knows, plays strange tricks with one's internal economy, and after two weeks of country work, station life and station work seem the acme of luxurious living. Yet so must the Gospel be taken to the women of the country side, who often live and die in some tiny hamlet, having never even gone to the nearest city; and those that take it must get down very near to the life those worn, suffering, sorrowing, country drudges live. And yet the rewards are current and real when slowly, syllable by syllable, some old soul is taught, "Jesus loves me this I know," until the knowledge that some one loves her—some one—yes, the mighty Son of God and Man of Sorrows—some one loves *even her* fills a once hopeless heart with the joy and light of heaven.

In this extremely proper Chinese country the ladies, unless frankly and decently aged with hair that is more than merely graying, speak only to the women, and the men gather outside or in the next room to hear the same story from the pastor or deacon who may often go along on such a tour. And if no church worker has gone there is always the Chinese Christian servant to do his best.

There was only one perfect Chinese servant and he died in early infancy. All the others have various and many faults—quite as many indeed as their masters have—but all recognition and credit is due to the Christian servants that again and again preach their master's sermons, warmed to a life-like flavor by the fervor of their own experience and lacking the stumbling inaccuracies of western tongues. So the truth is broadcast to the village crowds and some day that servant may become a mighty preacher to his own people. This again is another of the possible results of labor that is slow and hard—country work among the women by the lady missionaries—yet richly blessed of God to the salvation of souls.

Chapter V

IN THE very beginning of the work when the first converts came out of heathenism they were confronted with the problem of education for their children. In those days heathen worship was an integral part of the program in every school, and no child who did not bow to tablets and render worship to shrines could remain in the school. Out of this great need and the deep desire of the missionaries to rescue the children from a heathen routine and bring salvation to the rising generation there came into being mission schools on every station.

This educational hunger and need was but an outgrowth of and most accurately in line with the best in Chinese tradition and tendencies. Whatever that education might be, whether the slavish learning and imitation of the writings and precepts of the sages, or the more utilitarian learning of science and its practical application, the Chinese of today or of forty centuries gone by, hold learning as the highest good. So, too, the Gospel must reckon with this hunger, and the mission schools squarely met the issue.

Under Mission supervision they were well run, and with such additional items as special instruction in arithmetic, using Arabic numerals, a bit of singing, and rudimentary English, they soon ranked as the very best in each place, and non-Christian families were eager and glad to have their children enroll in the mission school. With it all there was effective teaching of Bible truth, required attendance at Sunday services, and happy results in young lives won for the Lord. Even after the introduction of westernized education in the public

school system, the mission schools still ranked high, and not only provided Christian education for the children of the church, but in attracting a large number of outside children constituted a truly evangelistic agency.

The need for separate girls' schools was, if anything even greater, for there were no other girls' schools of any sort in those days. Only with the coming of the Gospel was womanhood raised to dignity and consideration; and Christian parents, seeing the daughters of the family in a new light, were eager that they should learn and be trained for worthy Christian motherhood. The Girls' Boarding School was first opened in Taochow Old City, but later permanently located in Minchow, and for years a very complete course of study was given. That training eventually included teacher-training and Bible-school work, and from the Christian girlhood of the field Bible women and school teachers were prepared. Many of the consecrated teachers, workers, and pastors' wives of the present day were trained in that course. To lighten the financial burden considerable industrial work—needle work and knitting—helped both to defray expenses and as preparation in home economics.

Along with the development of a very complete course of training for the girls, there naturally came into being a Boys' Boarding School in Titao, where the boys were given advanced schooling leading to teacher's training and Bible preparatory courses. Thus step by step the Mission, with some small help from the churches, provided training for the youth of the churches, until at the end of the teachers' training and Bible preparatory courses the boy who had gone that far was ready to take over the task of teaching in one

of the lower schools, or enter whatever field of activity his parents and his circumstances might indicate. But throughout the entire process young lives were molded and trained for the Master. Never was the supreme importance of Bible teaching lost sight of or slighted. And from the last course those who felt the call of God in their lives were ready to enter the Bible School.

That school going on from the comprehensive foundations laid down in its inception provided a thorough, well-balanced, and even scholarly training. Makeshifts, or a hit-and-miss approach, could have no enduring place in the training of Chinese Christian workers. The tradition of scholarship, literary culture centuries old, all the racial bent for painstaking application, and above all a critical faculty even among those who rank as the uneducated, demanded a high standard for the Bible School. Nor was the practical aspect neglected. Daily open-air preaching and vacation-time evangelistic tours under competent leadership afforded abundant opportunity for practical work. So every three years a new class was graduated from the Bible School. And as an amazing amount of Bible School material was to be found in the church membership, even before the Bible School was closed in 1927 there was a question whether or not more workers were being trained than could be profitably used. But in that year of great changes all schools were closed, and the first chapter of Bible School work on the Kansu-Tibetan Border ended.

That year, too, marks a crisis in the school work of the entire field. For some time there had been a steadily increasing suspicion of and opposition to the mission schools. As the national educational system became more fully organized, the problems centering

around registration became acute. It was apparent that if a school did not register it would shortly be forced out of existence. And if it did register, the regulations that went into effect after registration made any religious program and a distinctly Christian education impossible.

An aroused nationalism that was violently opposed to any foreign influence regarded the mission-operated and mission-financed schools as a distinct threat to national unity, and the school children in the mission schools suddenly found themselves called the "running dogs of the foreigners." Also the exclusion of distinctly heathen ritual from the public school system made it possible for children from Christian homes to attend without engaging in idolatrous worship. In the greater problems attending the emergence of the Church from the status of a mission-subsidized mission church to that of a truly indigenous Chinese Church the schools were closed and forgotten. In the five years that elapsed between 1927 and 1932 the matter of church schools and distinct Christian schooling was regarded as a dead issue.

But though the days of mission subsidy and mission aid for the education for the children of the Church were passed, many remembered what a desirable thing such education had been. The children of Christian homes could go to the public schools, but there were serious drawbacks. Although there were no formal idolatrous rites to create an impossible situation, yet teachers who were unfriendly to the Gospel often did everything in their power to ridicule Christian pupils and make life miserable for them. Hounded by their teachers, and beset by a general antichristian atmosphere, many of the children from Christian homes be-

gan to grow away from their parents' faith, and the Christians began to look back gratefully to the time when mission schools had supplied Christian education and training for their children.

From that gratitude and the present need, there came into existence some church schools for the children of the Church. There was no question of mission subsidy, yet schools were started. Some of these schools were schools for girls, these being greatly aided by the active coöperation and direction of the lady missionaries. And from such humble beginnings the schools have prospered. The churches could render little of outright financial help, so the schools have been largely organized on a pay-their-own-way basis and again the children of the Church start the day with prayers, sing hymns for music, learn their Bibles as a part of the course, and go to church and Sunday school.

These church schools on the whole have found favor with the educational authorities, and have been treated with considerable latitude in the matter of the educational regulations, because they are indigenous, and nothing in support or direction smacks of foreign support or domination. What they will grow into no one can tell, but along with the self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating Church there has come into being for an educationally-minded people the tiny beginnings of a truly indigenous program of religious education.

That fact brings us back to the question of the Bible School. It is ten years since the last class was graduated from that school and much of that time has been filled with the turmoil of unsettled conditions and the throes of reorganization as an indigenous Church was born. Now not from the Mission but from that

Church there is coming the question about the Bible School. There is growing up a new generation, some of whom should be training for leadership in that Church, and at the same time the increasing number of small groups of believers necessitate the preparation of some training that will fit lay workers for the real, though limited, leadership such groups require. Long-term, formal training and schooling in Bible truth for the leaders of the Church of the future, and short-term practical training in the elements of Bible teaching and Christian work for lay workers—both these needs must soon be met, and the Church and the Mission must pull together to achieve that greatly to be desired solution.

Chapter VI

MISSIONARY occupation and church organization have mostly been discussed as related to the cities. But in the small villages is where the people live. These hamlets of anywhere from half a dozen to several score of families are the basic units of population. The people are overwhelmingly agricultural, but no one family would feel safe alone in the midst of the ancestral fields, so the homesteads are huddled together in tiny villages. Until it becomes a market town or acquires some additional importance as a stopping place on a main road, each village is strictly limited as to size; for when the farther fields become too far away a new center nearer to the fields comes into being. Such villages are somewhat self-contained, and many a family that if it lived in a lonely farmhouse would go to town quite frequently, recks little of the outside world, content perforce with the news, doings, and interests of the village.

These villages are incredibly numerous though drably inconspicuous, with houses of dirt-colored walls and roofs. Between terraced slopes in every hollow, at every widening of the valley floors, even wherever the ridges have a spread of leved ground sufficient for the huts and threshing floors, there are to be found the hamlets of the farmer folk of Kansu. Sometimes a fringe of half-discouraged trees—elm, willow, or poplar — surround the village, or thickets of buckthorn and mimosa darken the graveyard of the dead that well rivals in size the home sites of the living; but mostly the villages seem almost a part of the grey and yellow contours of the landscape—difficult to locate were it

not for the smoke of *kang* and kitchen firings that morning and evening drape the sky with the sign of life and movement.

Thousands of villages only to be known by a detective-work kind of inquiry, thickly dot the field of the Kansu-Tibetan Border. Adequate missionary evangelization of all these villages would be an impossibly hopeless task. From the days of the first converts the missionaries have sought to use native witness and so multiply evangelistic effort. One of the most promising forms of activity was the organization of evangelistic bands. In units comprised of two or more members such bands were sent into the districts to seed down the country with the Gospel. Three men having a mule or donkey to carry their possessions, Gospel literature, and preaching paraphernalia such as scrolls and banners, would go into one of the larger villages and follow a regular routine of visiting and open-air preaching, seeking to broadcast Gospel truth and also contact any who showed an active interest. The daily schedule of early rising, prayer, Bible study, and then the manifold activity of a day-long witness was of almost military severity and rigor. In bitter cold, or through the pouring rain and deepening mud of summer storms, they went from village to village, in the course of a year wearing out an astonishing number of shoes and sandals, but God blessed their efforts.

Preaching was also combined with colporteur work, and Gospel truth in written form was placed in homes, inns, and village stores. For the Chinese the printed page assumes an almost exaggerated importance. The ideographs that are so peculiarly a part of their precious four-thousand-year-old heritage, are in themselves objects of veneration. They are not the mere

phonetic representation of the spoken language but are in a way the immutable forms of the early thought patterns of the Chinese people. Not so many years ago one of the favorite methods of acquiring merit was to collect and ceremonially burn, as a precious offering, scraps of paper that had writings upon them. Even now it is almost a sacrilege carelessly to step upon any bit of writing. Thus Gospel literature merely as a bit of writing commanded respect. In its literary form, the Mandarin Bible is contributing as much to the modernization of written Chinese as Luther's Bible helped to form and fix the German language, and as literature would well hold its own. So through the efficient medium of the respected printed page, God's truth has come to many a studius and thoughtful Chinese, who in promise placed his feet upon the way of life when he took a tract, or bought a Scripture portion from a member of one of the evangelistic bands that toured the countryside.

All these bands were organized by the Mission and financed by foreign money. Thus the members of the bands had no answer to the shrewdly placed jibe, that they were paid to witness to the truth by the foreigners' money, and when their daily bread was so earned, was it for love of the truth or love of the foreigners' money? Increasingly the word "foreigner" was linked in public regard with economic penetration, western imperialism, and such catchwords of doubtful antecedents.

Then, just a year or so before the nationalistic unrest of 1927, a more indigenous form of effort, an evangelistic band sponsored and partially supported by the churches, was organized. It was designed as a break with accepted tradition, and as such experi-

mented with new methods of approach, new routine and practice. Given one of the smaller and as yet unreached counties of the field, this band under the leadership of the first Christian of the Titao district, began the effort to found from the ground up, an indigenous Church in the Wei-yuan district. Conversions followed, but the continued operation of the plan was broken up by the wars and troubles that from 1927 onward swept the field.

For years the matter of the reorganization of evangelistic bands has been held in abeyance. There is still an ample field of opportunity; after forty years much of the present field is in a sense unevangelized, and with recent developments, new areas have been left to us as an added responsibility. But the problems of field reorganization on a truly indigenous basis were paramount. And now that the Mission is again contemplating the matter of commissioning evangelistic bands, the churches are also taking up the consideration of the problem.

The work of the evangelistic bands in the past not only brought salvation to many, but established a tradition emphasizing the importance of *pu-tao*—broadcasting the Gospel—in the thinking of the Christians. So today in the indigenous Church, burdened though it may be with all the problems and embarrassments of independence, there is developing an effort to fulfill that primary obligation and answer that first call. In the meagre budgets of the churches, provision is being made for funds designated for that sort of work. Those of the membership who can give time are enlisted for periods and tours of evangelism, and those who cannot go, contribute provisions and money to

help in the expenses of the ones who give their time and strength.

For in the hearts of the Christians there not only rings the supremely compelling cry of the needs of their own—flesh of their flesh and bone of their bone—and in this a new nationalism and patriotism has become the ally of Gospel endeavor, but there reigns a deep conviction that obedience to God's command must come first in all the concerns that fill the Christian's mind and heart.

Chapter VII

TEN years ago the Chinese work on the Kansu-Tibetan Border was as deeply involved in the morass of mission subsidy, and was as unhealthily dependent upon that sort of financial help, as any work on any field of the Alliance. That was not because efforts had not been made to foster self-support, but all such efforts were largely neutralized by the very largeness of mission liberality and love for the Chinese Christians. According to western standards the people were so poor, it seemed so much the part of sympathy and love to build churches, hire evangelists, finance schools, and make the way easy for the infant Church. Although the Christian grace of giving was urged upon the Church yet the financial burden was mostly borne by the Mission.

In planning and expenditure, there was much of what the Chinese might call western lavishness and overliberality. Valiant attempts were made to square practice with theory, and by proceeding on a fixed schedule effect the change to an indigenous church policy. The financial burden was to be shifted from the Mission to the Church by a ten per cent transfer each year. The end promised to be merely a matter of mathematics but the reality was otherwise. Always something intervened to postpone the final adjustments, and self-support was delayed year by year.

It had become increasingly evident that the establishment on each field of a truly self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating Church was the answer not only to the mounting problems of mission administration, but to the cry and appeal for a swiftly

culminative world evangelization. The testimony of a century of experience in world-wide missions was well-nigh unanimous. The teaching of the New Testament as illumined by experience was conclusive. Not only did the missionaries see the desirability of such policy and practice, but among the church leaders there was a growing, although somewhat rueful, admission that such policy represented the true ideal of church development.

With a steadily rising tempo of nationalism in the years from 1922 to 1927, events and trends outside the Church also underlined with new significance certain facts. Again and again the jibe of mercenarism, and above all a mercenarism that accepted foreign money, though basically unfair, yet had enough of seeming foundation in fact to distress and bewilder those who witnessed for Christ. An increasing suspicion of foreign influence raised a barrier against the Gospel, when the preaching of that Gospel was financed by foreign money and directed by foreign control.

In the year 1927, a widely variant set of circumstances were suddenly brought to bear upon the entire problem. A spurious sort of union of Church and State promised a truly Chinese Church. Sympathy and the prestige of those in high places tacitly implied governmental help. The missionaries had to leave, and by the circumstances of their leaving not only set up an organization that could carry on, but made it seem likely that all mission property might eventually be turned over to the Chinese Church. Actuated by many motives, some of them of true worth and some of doubtful purity, the church leaders engineered the drafting of a formal request, that by one final arrangement the Mission move to let the work go on as a

fully self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating Church or association of churches. There was much of devious policy in the drafting of that request. In later years there were many recriminations and accusations about the true representative powers of those that drafted it, but the essential fact remains that the request was made and through it God overruled to initiate a drastic change of policy not by the Mission but by the Chinese Church.

The missionaries home on furlough could look at the entire problem in a far more detached way than when on the field. The desirability of drastic action had become increasingly evident to the members of the Mission. Once it was clearly recognized that the results of giving mission subsidy were not for the highest good of the Church, or at least brought in a train of attendant evils, then logically the best thing was to stop such subsidy at the first possible opportunity. The gradual change process was painful, irritating, and of doubtful utility. The whole problem was a matter of principle versus opportunism, and with the receipt of the request of the native Church, the unique opportunity of putting basic principles into practice presented itself. So with suitable financial adjustments in the way of final liberality, the Church was made theoretically self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating.

But in the meantime conditions on the field changed. State Christianity became increasingly odius and was finally completely discredited. The bright hopes of State patronage faded. The property still remained the property of the Mission to the great delight of the churches, for they saw that if mission property had been taken over, a basically pagan government would

have profited, not they. Then there followed a great famine and a terrible civil war, the Mohammedan Rebellion of 1928-1930, in the midst of which the missionaries returned to the field.

The church leaders utterly repudiated their action as to self-support, but such repudiation was regarded as ineffectual. As far as the principle of the case was concerned the matter was closed. There was no way back to mission subsidy: the bridges had been burned. There followed what might almost have been called a tacit strike, for the leaders largely disowning responsibility, turned to their own concerns and the struggle for a livelihood. Humanly speaking, the work must either be subsidized or it would go to pieces. It was not subsidized and it did not disintegrate, for faith would not die, worship would not cease, and praise must have expression. Believers still gathered, for they must meet and worship, and in very shame the leaders grudgingly, yet with a strange inward satisfaction, led the worship and service. Belief was not dead, for still souls were born into the Kingdom, though for a time in reduced numbers. The Church of the living Lord on the Kansu-Tibetan Border was founded on something more than mission funds: the discarding of opportunism and adherence to principle were justified.

The very disaster of the famine became a means of removing any resentment there might have been. For though in principle the Mission could not subsidize, yet Christians in America sent hundreds of dollars to save the lives of their fellow Christians on the Kansu-Tibetan Border. It was an expression of love that was deep and true, and it broke down any and all ill will which might have lingered. It forever raised the entire question above the charge of parsimoniousness,

and as a by-product it created a rather peculiar kind of financial stake that may have been what the Church, still weak in faith, really needed.

The last distribution of famine funds, as is usually the case, was made just before harvest, and without exception each church, after the money had been truly delivered into its control, voted regularly and in open meeting to hold the money as a sinking fund to be used as an aid in self-support. Because of that vote some might have to go on further short rations for a few days, but no one would starve and although their faith for self-support was weak, their sacrifice was real in voting for the use of the Church, that which they might have divided as largess among the membership.

The arrangement was not ideal nor has it so since proven, being at times the cause of considerable trouble within the churches. Yet the aid derived has been a stepping stone to the right kind of self-support, that now more and more is becoming the basic financial policy of each church, when all church activity shall depend primarily upon the freewill offerings of God's people. So in this, again God's permissive and overruling providence has been manifest and the work goes on.

Now some of the churches support full-time pastors, some part-time pastors, and some provide for assistant pastors, and for special evangelistic effort. Others can only make small offerings for pastors who are truly lay workers. Some of the churches have established schools for the children of the church, and all contribute to support the Chinese chairman of the field, who gives his full time to leadership and a spiritual and evangelistic ministry in the annual church conferences.

But the true victory is not in the matter of finances and self-support. With zeal and earnestness never before known, the Christians administer the affairs of their own churches. They tacitly demand from the workers a far more faithful ministry than the Mission was ever able to command, and there is joy and a sense of the blessing of God that comes to crown every sacrifice.

Then, too, and especially since the reorganization conference in 1932, when the final reorganization was perfected, there has been a revival of evangelism and witness. That witness need never to hang the head at the charge of being paid for with foreign money, for it is all for Christ, and under Him for the truly indigenous Chinese Church of Christ of The Christian and Missionary Alliance of South Kansu.

That same Church now, more than ever before, welcomes and wants the help of the missionaries and the Mission in the prosecution of a common task. And in the year of 1936, a year of turmoil and communist invasion—God so blessed the witness of that Church that more were added in baptism than in any one year in the past. Thus God is blessing the self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating Church on the Kansu-Tibetan Border that through mixed motives, disaster, famine, warfare, and the shock of drastically applied policy, yet in faithfulness and the grace of God has come to be a truly indigenous Church.

PART IV

ISLAM IN KANSU

Not only is the Kansu-Tibetan Border field one of the twenty fields of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, but by the sound of the call to prayer that rings five times a day from the minarets of Hochow, by the fierce cries of "Allah—huda" from Salar warriers, and by the grim fatalism that sent the Moslems of Taochow Old City wordlessly to their doom; the field is linked by a special tie with the borders of Arabia, the valley of the Niger, the Moslem challenge of India, and the progress of truth among the Moors of the Philippines, or the Malays of the Netherland East Indies, for it is another of the fields where the Cross and the Crescent are ranged in conflict for the souls of men.

When in Tombouctou a convert from Islam takes his place in Christ, when a Malay in Lombok breaks his ceremonial Moslem vows, or a Moro in Jolo ceases to call on Allah and the Prophet, a sympathetic whisper of praise is heard in far off Central Asia, where the Gospel is also being preached to Moslems on the Kansu-Tibetan Border. The Moslem workers of that long, long battle line cheer each other on, and count the hand-picked fruit of labor and tears. By their calling and endeavor they are in historic succession to Raymond Lull the martyr-apostle to Islam.

PART IV

ISLAM IN KANSU

The Racial and Religious Problem
The Crescent Serves the Cross
Even Moslems Believe

Chapter I

THE Moslem peoples of the Kansu-Tibetan Border field belong to three distinctly racial groups, each separate from the others but all bound together by the ties of a common religion. They are basically non-Chinese in heritage and tradition, enduring racial entities that have successfully resisted assimilation by the Chinese.

Although Hochow, which has been called the Mecca of the Moslems in China, is the district where most of the Chinese-speaking Mohammedans of Kansu are found, yet those same people are distributed irregularly all over the province. These Chinese-speaking Moslems have become more like the Chinese than either the Tung Hsiang or Salar people, for by intermarriage, proselytism, and the adoption of Chinese children during the rebellions, they have a large admixture of Chinese blood. Yet a peculiar Semetic cast of feature, occasional ruddiness of complexion, and many un-Chinese traits and characteristics, point back to their descent from the Ta-shi (Arab) mercenaries, that from the Tang dynasty in the eighth century onward again and again with armed might have entered the scenes of Chinese history.

That warlike tradition has persisted to the present day, and the Moslems of the northwest who have borne the brunt of subjugating the unruly Tibetans, are fighting fiercely against Soviet aggression in Chinese Turkestan, and by their determination and prowess deflected the course of the famous Communist March of 1936. The general, who in Manchuria, resisted longest the Japanese, was Ma Chan San, a Moslem, and Peh

Chung Hsi, who at this moment commands the troops fighting in defense of Nanking, is a follower of the Prophet.

Yet not only are they warriors but traders and business men of outstanding acumen. Lacking much of the contemplative love of learning that is so much a distinguishing feature of Chinese character, they are fiercely aggressive, invading the money markets of finance, and with hardihood and daring carrying the burden of the venturesome trade that brings the wool and furs of the Tibetan plateau to Kalgan and Tientsin. In the fierce struggle for existence, they crowd even the enduring, persistent Chinese to the wall.

To the east of Hochow, in the steeply eroded maze of the mountains and valleys of the triangle formed by the confluence of the Yellow and Tao Rivers, are found the Tung Hsiang Moslems. They are the descendants of the Ouigour Tartars, and among themselves speak a dialect of Mongolian. Resolutely they hold their own in a region that by reason of all the sink holes, precipices and rifts caused by erosion of the barren loess plateau is naturally inaccessible, and equally a region of uncertain productivity. All the factors of their hard battle against recurrent drought and threatening famine, have combined to make them hardy and persistent. Oddly and somewhat proudly conscious of their harsh language, and all the characteristics of facial line and heavy bearding that set them apart from the Chinese; they are intensely clannish. To live they must travel from the area of their homes, yet in all their association with the Chinese, they have won a most unsavory reputation as thieves, burglars, and footpads. Whenever a well-tunneled hole through adobe walls marks a successful burglary, or the report

goes out that the roads are unsafe, general opinion affirms that surely the Tung Hsiang Huei-huei are involved.

But the picturesque cutthroats of the Hsuin-hua district, the restless Salars, are the true trouble makers of Kansu. They were trouble makers in their far-away home in Samarkand in the twelfth century; so much so that popular and concerted indignation demanded that they move. Given a bag of earth from the home sites then denied them, they started on one of those long sorrowful treks that have marked the heart of Asia with ghostly trails. The bag of soil was a sample of the earth of the new home sites they sought, and a white camel guided their steps.

Near the Yellow River in the northwestern extremity of what is now the field of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission, the camel died, and opening the bag the wanderers found that the earth of the locality coincided with the sample they carried. Whatever objections the people of the region had to their locating on the spot were no doubt drastically overruled by the travel-hardened warlike Sarts. And so the Hsuin-hua district was settled by a people, who, speaking a dialect of Turkish, have ably comported themselves in accordance with the traditions of the typical Turk.

Of all the Moslems of Kansu, they are the most bigoted and intolerant, their intolerance not extending alone with fire and sword to the unbelievers outside the faith, but breaking out within their own villages against any irregularity or heterodoxy. Such a feud was the beginning of the great rebellion seventy years ago, and such holy quarrels break out with rifle fire and fierce slaughter on the slightest occasion. Of all the Moslems, they are the most unapproachable, the

most stubbornly resistent to any outside influence. The recent rebellion of 1928-1930 had its beginnings in the favoring atmosphere of the Salar villages, well justifying the habit of Kansu public opinion that listens half fearfully for the mutter of unrest or dissension among the divisions or *kong,* whereby the descendants of the adventurous wanderers from Samarkand number themselves.

The Chinese have hardly known what to do with these fiercely resistent alien peoples in their midst, and for centuries by acts of oppression and repressive measures, have walled them in with hatred and dislike. The Moslems have retaliated with rebellion and violence, and the attitudes and ill will between the two greatly complicate the carrying on of mission work among the Moslems, for work that largely attempts to reach the Chinese by that association will fail of a hearing with the sons of Islam.

Yet differing racial origins and economic competition are only part of the problem, for above everything else the Mohammedan is a follower of the Prophet, a believer in Allah the all-merciful who most gladly accords pious Moslems entrance into a paradise of sensuous delight, when they come to the gates with swords that are wet with the life blood of the idolaters and unbelievers. First of all the things that sets the Moslem apart from the Chinese, is his abstinence from and hatred of idolatry. That is real enough for his religion forbids having any sort of an image or even picture in the house. By way of definition, if an eye or eyes are showing, it is a picture, and if no eye or eyes are showing, it is merely a decorative pattern and permissible. Such is their hatred of idolatry, that in

the course of a rebellion the rebels make a very thorough job of destroying all temples and idols.

Then for the Moslem there is the observance of all the ceremonial rules of cleanliness and the dietary laws. They are in general quite like those observed by the orthodox Jew. Most outstanding are the rules prohibiting the eating of pork, and necessitating having everything killed for meat *hallal*—the throat slit by a believer who simultaneously ejaculates the formula, "By the grace of Allah." Finally, Ramadan, the month-long feast when nothing may be eaten or drunken between sun-up or sun-down, must be kept. It makes no difference how long the day's work or travel may be, or even how fierce the battle, if war is the order of the day, the true Moslem must let nothing pass his lips until evening has come. In Moslem communities that rule makes the night one long period of feasting and celebration. A pilgrimage to Mecca is also enjoined upon all Moslems, but only the wealthy or very devout of these far-away sons of Islam are ever able to go.

But when all these religious duties have been performed, the Moslem feels more or less at liberty to go and do as he pleases, and lying, adultery, cheating, and murder are but minor peccadilloes for him, while with heartless arrogance and blistering curses he consigns the idolaters to Ebilis and hell. His faith does give the Moslem a peculiar fatalistic courage. What must be will be—all depends on the "word of Allah's mouth." So chanting the death chant he hurls himself into battle. We watched the greatly outnumbered rebels in the battle of Kong Chang with only swords and spears charge into machine gun fire, making a way out by sheer reckless daring and hardihood. Much of

that same fatalism marked the behavior of the victims of the Taochow Old City massacre. With the binding of their arms they realized they had been tricked, and with hardly a word of repining, though some muttered fierce curses that for long years haunted the executioners, stoically they marched out of the city gate to pass under the swinging blades of the big swords.

Most of all, his faith constitutes a challenge to Christian Missions. It cannot be ignored for it, too, is missionary and eventually the battle will be drawn among the pagan peoples if the missionary neglects or evades the challenge of Islam. Islam accepts so much of truth, on the half truths purloined from both Judaism and Christianity building a world edifice of blatant falsehood, yet fiercely resists and competes with the whole truth, and on this fact the issue is joined.

If one would know what is the uniquely essential fact or doctrine of the Gospel, it is only necessary to ask what part Islam rejects. It accepts the virgin birth of Christ, His miracles, and even looks with anticipation toward His coming back to earth to execute judgment and reign in righteousness. Only one thing is left out. Islam teaches that on the way to the cross Christ was caught up alive to Heaven by a rescuing angel, and by denying the death and resurrection of the Lord discards the saving power of God's truth. So what might have been a way to God has become the proud, arrogant, frankly sensual religion of the sword. Today all Islam waits for the messengers of the Cross to put that sacred symbol, and the scene it represents, back where it belongs as the center of God's gracious salvation for all the fallen, erring sons of Adam.

Chapter II

THE Moslems of Kansu have had, in the providence of God, a special part in shaping the policies and growth of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission, quite apart from the missionary work done among them, or the challenge they represent. That part has been largely an unintentional by-product; the providence of God converting the most unlikely means into instrumentalities to aid the progress of the truth. This influence has extended, though in varying degrees and in a different way, to both the Chinese and the Tibetan fields of the border country.

Among the Chinese the ancient dread of the Moslems, the ever lurking possibility of a sudden eruption of destruction and death to blast the fairest prospect of the present, and all the uncertainties of fear, placed a portentious mark on all purely mundane prosperity and blessings. Over well-filled granaries and piled up wealth, it hinted significantly, "This day may require not only all of these but thy very life also." And the fear of the Moslems again and again has helped rival military factions and leaders to compose their difficulties without resorting to arms, for in all their bickerings they feared to give the Moslems an occasion or an opportunity, and so this fear oddly enough has, at times, made for peace.

When the fierce, restive spirit of the Mohammedans did get out of hand, the dangers incident to civil warfare engulfed the missionaries as well as the Chinese. They were robbed again and again. All routine work was perforce laid aside, and as refugees they lived an uneasy if not hunted existence, yet with this difference

that wherever they were able to get in touch with the rebel leaders they were accorded recognition and protection.

Some odd quirk of fellow-feeling for other outlanders that, too, were aliens among the Chinese, some grudging feeling that the missionaries were also worshipers of one God in the midst of the idolaters, and then a very practical appreciation of all in first aid and the treatment of wounds that the missionaries were able to render, contributed to such special consideration. On the very battlefield, on the roads, in camp, or when treated as guests in missionary homes, while the Chinese in utter fear furtively looked on to see what would happen, the rebel leaders again and again showed their favor.

Even so, the missionaries at times were in acute danger when a single misstep might have meant anything, and at other times they choose the better part of valor and used their utmost endeavor to stay away from contact with the rebel armies, yet the fact remains that on the whole they received remarkable consideration from those outlawed and desperate men. And that consideration was used to extend protection and comfort to the Chinese—Christians and heathen alike. But it is in relation to the Tibetan work that the Moslems have exerted the greatest influence. It was the mere rumor of their possible approach that pushed the pioneers into Tibetan country, but later it was the direct force of Moslem military might that made a way for the Gospel in the lamasery centers of Labrang, Hehtso, and Rongwu.

A Moslem military man, defense commissioner of the border he was called, determined to exploit the rich resources and tax the trade of Tibetan country.

For generations the Chinese had been quite willing to let the turbulent Tibetans do as they pleased, but not so the Moslems when there was wealth and power to be gained. They had a hardihood and bravery that well overmatched the Tibetans and in addition they had better armament.

It was following the Moslem victory over the Tibetans that Amchok was first visited, and it was following that victory and the establishment of Moslem law and order that Labrang, Hehtso and Rongwu were opened. For as trade moved in and law and order began to function, the missionaries found an entrance. Thus greed and the lust for power unintentionally made a way for the Gospel.

It had seemed that the power of Buddhism not only reigned supreme in the hearts of the Tibetans, but its temporal authority and prejudice was an enduring guarantee that the Gospel should find no entrance. And then God used the military and prowess of one great false religion to break the might of another great false religion, and the exploits of the hardy Moslem cavalry riding under the sign of the Crescent—historic symbol of firm resistance to the Gospel—was used by God to make a way for the Cross among the peoples of northeast Tibet.

Still later the Moslem rebellion of 1928-1930 resulted in the final destruction of Taochow Old City, and that disaster with all its attendant lawlessness and unrest drove the missionaries, who had lived there and used it as a base of operations, into Tibetan country as refugees. Only as refugees would the suspicious people of Samtsa Rong have permitted the foreigners to come, and the same consideration opened doors in Te-bu land.

According to the varying fortunes of the bitter warfare, sometimes the Chinese were refugees; sometimes the Moslems were refugees. But the missionaries were not only neutral and enjoyed the favor of both parties, but were able to do relief work and first-aid work that won friendship and response from all. And in particular Moslems who had trade interests and favorable contacts among distant tribes, by encouragement, advice, and the giving of introductions, helped the missionaries in pushing their way to new fields along the trails of trade.

Finally, Moslem military might and power have been equally a strong barrier against the threat of communist penetration from the north, and a military hazard that discouraged the march of the Chinese communists from the south. Though generally loyal to the central government, at times it has seemed that the power of Moslem arms boded ill for the future, a dark shadow of menace and threat. Yet under that shadow with no hindrance and much incidental favor, the work of preaching the Gospel on the Kansu-Tibetan Border has gone on strangely indebted in the providence of God to the power of its strongest opponent —Islam.

Chapter III

WHEN the pioneers of early days began to preach the Gospel in Taochow Old City, they found that there, as elsewhere, the Moslems were the most interested listeners. Sometimes argument would arise but always there was a crowd, and again and again through the years the sight of those intent listening faces—men standing for hours giving close heed to the truth—stirred the hope that surely there would be some who would turn to the Lord. And at rare intervals there were those who secretly would come to question and argue, admitting the compelling power of the Gospel yet held back by fear.

Increasingly the Moslems of that district manifested an active friendliness toward the foreigners. Especially was this true of the members of what was known as the New Sect, for in Taochow as elsewhere, Islam is split into mutually warring sects. The New Sect in a sense represented a liberalizing movement, for though they did not change in the slightest degree the strict formula of ceremonial and religious observance, they differed radically from the orthodox Moslems in that they read and used a Chinese translation of the Koran thereby gaining a better knowledge of that book than those who read it only in the imperfectly understood Arabic.

The origin of the sect really centered around the person and claims of the founder who announced that he was Jesus come back to earth again. Just all that took place in the matter of psychic phenomena during the beginnings of the sect is not for outsiders to know, but by the Chinese the sect was somewhat derisively

called the *Chan-san-chiao* — felt coat religion — for it was said that the leader at times granted his followers a view of their departed ones by letting them look up the sleeve of a certain felt coat. In the matter of economics the sect was organized into a sort of modified commune and as a great trading company, with what amounted to almost a monopoly of some Tibetan trade, prospered greatly. The founder was first imprisoned and later killed through the machinations of the orthodox Moslems, but his successor maintaining the claims of his predecessor successfully carried through the creation of a most effective business organization, and the New Sect uniformly continued to prosper.

In political outlook the sect is decidedly enlightened, keeping out of the anti-Chinese plotting engaged in by their more rabid coreligionists. Even in the recent rebellion, when seemingly caught in a most hopeless dilemma they yet escaped with a minimum of loss, and were the only survivors in any numbers from among the Taochow Old City Moslems. For the effort to bring the Gospel to the Mohammedans of that place is an effort past and ended; the community of Islam is no more. In the height of great material prosperity, when they were a proud, assured people, not caring to rebel they were yet hopelessly involved in the last Mohammedan rebellion and in the putting down of that rebellion, by a series of disasters culminating in the great massacre in the summer of 1929, the Moslems of the Taochow districts were well-nigh exterminated. In the matter of Gospel opportunity they were the most fortunate of all the Moslems, yet had persistently rejected all of grace, and now the region of their past prosperity and dominance is a waste of ruined homes

and untilled fields. After years of exile the bitter, sullenly resentful survivors are now returning to realize with a fresh access of hate how few of their number remain.

The day of opportunity for the Mohammedans of Taochow came to an end in bloodshed and general disaster. Almost without exception they steeled their hearts to the very end. In earlier years one Moslem merchant of Taochow New City made public confession of faith and lived a life of truly Christian testimony until he had to flee the district, for the fanaticism of the aroused Moslems would not let him stay. Then years later when the last scenes of the final disaster had already come, though none recognized clearly their true meaning, Chi-ko-tsi and his family were saved.

For years he had been a firm friend of the missionaries, and in his country home they had often been entertained as honored guests. Then when Tibetan troops had ravaged that substantial farm house, Chi-ko-tsi and his family came as refugees to the mission station. On Sunday, when bandit troops, loaded down with loot were riding through the streets, behind closed doors the Christians and all those non-Christian refugees, Chinese and Moslem, met for service. Danger for one and all was in the air. The city was filled with wild, terrifying alarms. God's Word, and prayers were the only realities in a world of uncertainty. So Chi-ko-tsi, sitting far back in a corner, heard the words of Isaiah 1 : 5, "Why should ye be stricken any more? Why will ye revolt more and more?" and on through all the yearning appeal of God's cry to men, through disaster and pain, with a new appreciation, until then and there he publicly accepted Christ as his Saviour.

Though the city was even then seized with a des-

perate foreboding, a knowledge of impending doom, yet the rumor spread like wildfire and the Moslems asked with amazement, "Has one of our number turned?" The leader of the New Sect came in hot haste to ask the question, and others asked it with a certain half-yielding wistfulness. It seemed that the hour of salvation for the Old City Moslems was striking. But instead, though their meaning was not clearly understood, the sure harbingers of doom thickened. The missionaries left for itineration in Tibetan country, but Chi-ko-tsi and family, with joy in their new-found faith, stayed on in Taochow Old City. At that farewell was the last time they ever saw Chi-ko-tsi and his family alive. Two months later when one of the missionaries rode through threatening dangers and all the horrors of a freshly sacked city to see if there were any to be saved, the mutilated bodies of Chi-ko-tsi and his family lay outside the compound gate. Too late to bring protection, all the missionary could do was to give them a decent burial. So ended, what for a time seemed like the beginning of victory for the Gospel among Moslem hearts. But for Chi-ko-tsi and his family the heavy swinging blades were the beginning of eternal life amid all the sad desolation of universal death.

When Hochow was first opened as a mission station much incidental work was done among the Moslems of the district. Yet in Hochow there was a more deeply rooted resistance to even the preaching of the Gospel. It was not for nothing that the mosques, shrines, schools, and sacred places of Islam were set throughout the district. Even though the great Moslem general, Ma An Liang, by studied, purposeful courtesy, had discouraged violence yet the *ahongs* were for a time

fiercely resistant. And whenever a gospel witness was given to the Tung Hsiang in either their village centers or at the county seat of Tai-tsi-si, the response was a barely concealed contempt.

To effectively do Moslem work required special gifts, special preparation, and above all a special commission that would set one free to utilize every possible means of approach without prejudice or hindrance. For a long time no one was released to do such work, but in latter years recognition of the unique responsibility the Alliance has to evangelize the three different racial groups of Moslems found within its field, has resulted in special workers being set aside in this hard, and but for God and His great power, seemingly hopeless task.

The station of Hsuin-hua among the Turki-speaking Salars was opened in 1929. Due to furlough and sickness of workers it has been closed for long periods but has been newly reoccupied. The Gospel has touched many Chinese hearts in Hsuin-hua, but of the Moslems all that can be said is that prejudice has been broken down, and some contacts made with earnest hearts that seem to be seeking the truth. The Salar boast is that no one will ever believe, but when the Spirit of God begins to move, vain is the boast of men, and against that day witness of the truth of Jesus, not merely as prophet but as Son of God and Saviour, goes on throughout the troublous region of the Salar Moslems.

So, too, in Hochow the efforts of the resident missionaries can be directed mainly to reaching the Moslems of the district. The Chinese Church though small and poor is healthy and alive, and the missionaries can well go on to that other harder task. Much of prejudice has been broken down, and today it is possible

to reach the Tung-hsiang people in a way that was not possible thirty years ago.

Yet even from that past there comes a sign of hope for the present of the work in Hochow. Years ago one Moslem, a proselyte to Islam from Chinese heathenism, was converted and witnessed boldly for his Lord. Later with the ascendency of the Moslems in military matters, he was forced to flee to another part of China, and today the only hostage to the Gospel from among the Moslems of the Hochow district is the faithful servant of the Minchow mission station, for old Ma-ie after years of resistance and later indecision has finally confessed his faith in Christ.

A number of years ago the visit of Dr. Zwemer, the great missionary to the Moslems, to the Mohammedan section of the Kansu-Tibetan Border field, brought great encouragement to the workers. He not only brought special counsel and advice, but a new sense of fellowship in a world-wide task, a realization of comradeship with others who labored in all the vastness of the Moslem world. And the missionaries surely needed such a vision. By the terms of their special calling they were committed to one of the most gallant, and up to the present, most seemingly hopeless, ventures known to the world of missionary endeavor. But there can be no selective choosing for those who would be faithful. Wherever by the leading and direction of God the battle lines are drawn, be it in easy fruitful fields or where the call to Moslem prayer and the creed of Allah and the Prophet mark the fiercest conflict, the struggle must go on with no doubt of God's final planned, and ordered victory.

PART V

"TIBET WHOSE OPENING DOORS . . ."

The account of the work among the Tibetans is a story of hope deferred. When they were turned back from Labrang, rioted out of Pao-an, forbidden a visit to Mei-wu, and restricted to the narrow limits of the Taochow and Chone districts, the pioneers yet hoped on, waiting for the doors to open. Then nearly a generation later those stations became occupied and the first general advance into Tibetan country began, to continue in the opening of the third line of stations, and the extensive itineration of the present day. Thus a hope deferred became a hope fulfilled.

For years in that hard field there was no sign of fruitage. At last, friendly to the messengers of the Gospel, the Tibetans yet seemed by all the forces of demon influence, by all the powers of that ancient subtle faith, and by their own sinfulness, thrice sealed against the Gospel. And for long years hope for the Gospel to break forth among the Tibetans was a hope deferred. Not yet is it fulfilled, but the signs of a break are multiplying here and there in the salvation of individuals, and with those signs the doors to the heart of Tibet swing still wider.

Praise God that for hope deferred there is yet sure fulfillment, and with that present fulfillment the grandest hope of all grows brighter with immediacy, for did not Dr. Simpson say, "Tibet whose opening doors so clearly touch the portals of His coming."

PART V

"TIBET WHOSE OPENING DOORS . . ."

First Tibetan Contacts and a Foothold
Chone and Te-bu Work
Labrang and Lamas
Hehtso and the Farming Clans
Pao-an Again and Sacrifice
Lhamo and Nomad Work
"Westward Moves . . ."

Chapter I

AS THE beginnings of Alliance work among both Chinese and Moslems of the Kansu-Tibetan marches were found in Taochow Old City so, too, it was the focal point of the endeavor to reach the Tibetans, and for years was the only place where satisfactory contact with those peoples was maintained. Through those contacts the missionaries were introduced to all aspects of Tibetan life, for representatives of all the racial variations to be found among the Tibetans, as well as types of activity and habits of livelihood, came to Taochow Old City. From the steppe region the hardy nomads, chiefly distinguished by greater brawn, skins that are blacker from a more enduring grime, less of clothing, and greater purity of spoken Tibetan, came annually to trade for the year's supply of grain. From the Te-bu region there came not only the fierce and hardy ruffians of the upper valley but also the stunted folk of the lower canyons and gorges of that system. And on three sides of Taochow Old City the river clans, farmers of the upper valleys and seminomadic or nomadic tent-dwellers, lived so close that all the impulses and influences of Tibetan life were a part of the city itself.

The nearest Tibetan lamasery was less than two miles away, and scores of other lamaseries, large and small, were within a day's ride. The red-robed bonzes, controlling most of the wealth and doing most of the trading of their people, ceaselessly haunted the lanes of Taochow Old City. So, too, the lamas or living Buddhas that rode in state, flaunting robes of the sacred yellow, through the streets of the city were a constant

reminder of the religious power that with supreme despotism dominated all of Tibetan life, and in themselves as "saviours" represented the hope of salvation which Buddhism promises in devious fulfillment for the utterly devout.

With condescending hauteur the lamas read the books proffered them by the newcomers, and one day one of their number invited those strangers to his own lamasery of Da-rge. So the missionaries crossed the swift barrier of the Tao River and visited among the monks. With singleness of purpose and patient tact they pressed into every friendly opening. For years they could only work within a short radius of the city, so all the more reason did they have for making the most of every opportunity.

A fat, much begrimed, ex-robber in a village some fifteen miles from Taochow Old City on the Tao River, with the same courage that had made him a greatly feared raider, invited the outlanders to his home. With their families they came to stay in a tent on the partly wooded communal meadow beside the river, and all was well until the pleasant dry spell lasted on into a drought. Watching the grain that whitened too soon, the villagers laid the blame on the foreigners and friendliness vanished. To calm his disturbed neighbors, Akku Chi-ru suggested that the foreigners be asked to join their praying to the chanting of the village that rain might come, and so the missionaries were asked to pray with such good effect that some time later one of the villagers came privately to ask that they pray for the rain to stop for just one day. He wanted to raise the framework of his new house. But Chi-ru's home continued to be open to the missionaries, and Lum-ba-shok

from the near-by village began to read and ponder the Gospel.

With the passage of the years, the guest-room work of Taochow Old City was developed into a mighty means both for the spread of the truth and for the opening of doors. Pressing hard upon the opening of each door, the missionaries went farther and farther beyond the ancient Tartar wall that was the boundary between two lands. A well-established first aid center and much medical treatment helped greatly in creating this welcome. Though occupation of Labrang and Pao-an had been denied those pioneers, yet there was an era within a day's ride where hundreds of villages made up the near-by Tibetan field. After some years there were families in that field who learned to call on Jesus as Saviour and cease from vain offerings at Buddha shrines. Before that time, however, visits had been made to Ja-mu-ghun, Shes-ra-tsa-mdo, and many other places north of the Tao River. Also in the northern hills, Cha-rki lamasery and the villages that were linked to it were touched, and a line of friendly contacts made along the short road to Titao.

More and more the Tibetans learned to come to the mission station of Taochow Old City where, in addition to a spacious guest room, there was a special courtyard for the accommodation of large parties and caravans. Brought by a mutual friend, a living Buddha from the upper Tao River basin, came to call and stay, and a return call took the missionary three days ride up the Tao River into Samtsa Rong, and though the people of the district muttered fiercely against his coming and hastened his going, yet it meant one more district touched by the truth. And another day a lama came from some place far off to the southwest called

Stag-tsang-lha-mo and having received much of kindness from the foreigners, went on home and even the memory of his visit was for the time lost.

Night after night to guests in the big guest room the Gospel was preached in song, word, and picture until the time came that on Sunday afternoons Tibetans gathered to sing with hearts and voices, *Ye-shu-nga-la-bsyam-bar-mdzat* (Jesus loves me), for some had been baptized in the waters of that stream that for a part of its course marks the boundary between Chinese and Tibetan country.

With the multiplication of guests and friends, the country farther and farther beyond the frontier began to take form and shape filled with definite objectives to be visited, if not on this trip then on the next. Taochow became the base for the outfitting of all such outgoing caravans and parties. From Taochow they started out to settle in Hehtso, Labrang, and Pao-an, and from Taochow Old City they started out to explore and visit Rajah, and Ngawa and all the intermediate points that lay beyond the frontier, for Taochow was the best base for outfitting and making a start of any place along the entire border.

But long before that time, part of the Tibetan work of Taochow Old City had been expanded to Da-rge-tgon-ba, later called Luba Si. Mention has already been made of how that tiny lamasery had come into possession of the Mission. But with that possession there had also come opportunity and responsibility toward the Tibetans of the surrounding area. In response to the Gospel several Tibetans and half-Tibetans, from points both above and below Luba, had accepted Christ but the two outstanding converts from Luba Si were Akku Senge-ge and Akku Tan-dzen.

Akku Seng-ge was a devout monk who, though he loyally served the missionaries as servant and major-domo in the station of Chone, yet for the greater part of that time held strictly to his Buddhistic vows. He would pray to Jesus and he would say the prayers of his own religion, too, so for years his heart was torn with indecision. Indeed, his very integrity of soul for a time seemed to hinder him, for having made up his mind finally to accept Christ without reservation he felt bound by his vows to his Living Buddha, and felt he must notify him and obtain his release before he could accept baptism. The Living Buddha had gone away to Mongolia for a visit of indeterminate length and had not been heard from for years. But finally Akku Seng-ge cut loose from all of his religious entanglements and was baptized.

Akku Tan-dzen had a home haunted by demon influence and a family plagued by sickness. He himself was desperately ill and accepting the Saviour as the Healer of his soul asked Him also to heal his body and was made well. For years he was the leader of the little Christian community of Luba Si, and spent the last days of his life as Tibetan evangelist in Chone, giving a true and effective witness for his Lord.

The little church at Luba contains a number of Tibetans and half-Tibetans, and the Tibetan Christians from up the river who used to worship in Taochow Old City, now also gather at the place where a lamasery became a mission station and now houses a church. Just before the evacuation in 1935, some of those Christians had planned for evangelistic services in their own villages, having finally won out against community opposition that at one time was so fierce that it threatened their lives.

For a number of years Lumba-shok's village of Shen-ti was also occupied as a base for working among the many villages of the lower Tao River basin. With knowledge and the general opening of Tibetan country that field has also extended to Samtsa Rong, two days ride up the Tao River. Yet it all is now worked from Luba. Taochow Old City is still largely an uninhabited ruin with a shifting population that comes and goes. So Luba has now become the base station for advance. It is from Luba that the caravans start out for the farther Tibetan field, and it is to Luba that they return while a steady flow of guests from nomad country, from Te-bu land, and from all the village country of the Tao River basin make it a center for reaching a great cross section of Tibetan life, and if not the ideal base Taochow Old City once was at least a good substitute until that city is rebuilt. It served the purpose of introducing the missionaries to all the aspects of Tibetan life though now much of their work and activity far exceed the extent and scope of those early introductions.

FIELD COMMITTEE

The Chinese Church Committee with missionary advisers. Foreign missionaries, left to right: Front, C. F. Snyder and W. N. Ruhl; Rear, A. R. Fesmire and Thomas Mosely.

CONFERENCE IN TITAO

Sixty-two delegates from the Kong Chang, Minchow, Chone, Lu Pa, Taochow Old City, Taochow New City, Hochow, Kuan Pu, and Titao churches were in attendance. The missionary delegates were Mr. Fesmire, Miss Haupberg, Mr. and Mrs. Snyder, Mr. and Mrs. Holton, and Mr. and Mrs. Mosely. Some of the delegates came in carts, some on donkeys, and some on foot; others came floating down the swiftly flowing waters of the Tao River on wood rafts; yet others crossed the high mountain ranges on muleback, braving the mud bogs and the bandits.

Chapter II

CHONE was a town that sunned itself in a bend of the Tao River facing the heavily timbered slopes of the Min Shan foothills; a town of great Tibetan houses enclosed within the half-ruined length of a Chinese wall that straggled uncertainly up and down the steep slopes. Chone was also a lamasery that, with massive well-built outline, crowned the terrace of the mountainside and overlooked the town; a lamasery of wealth and learning filled with gods and relics, great houses of the Living Buddhas, and the printing house where impressions of the Buddhist Scriptures were made. The town and lamasery gave their name to an extensive area along the Kansu-Tibetan marches and across the great barrier range in the Te-bu Valley system, where the upper and lower Te-bus owned allegiance to the Chone Prince who lived where eighteen generations of rulers had lived before him. As Taochow Old City, fifteen miles away among the last of the Chinese villages, was the trade center of the border region, so Chone was the religious and political center for most of the near-by Tibetan country.

Since the earliest missionary occupation of the field it had been visited repeatedly, and in 1905 a missionary family took up residence in the town that lay under the fortress-like lamasery. That advance step into a center of Tibetan religious and political life was made against a very determined opposition. The Prince, a callow youth who was having his own troubles with the encroachment of Chinese authority or interference, did not dare openly oppose but put pressure on the peo-

ple of the town not to give a foothold to the newcomers. The only place that could be found was a great well-built house that, however, had been vacant for years for it was haunted, and death and disaster had driven out the former occupants. When the rooms were cleaned out, they found the skeleton of a murdered Te-bu that told its own tale of former violence and evil.

The lamasery authorities, covertly abetted by the Prince, built a tower of the curse to cast its influence upon the foreigners, but another house in line seemed to catch the force of the curse and members of that family died in significant numbers, while the missionaries lived on to win with patience, courtesy, and ever-ready willingness to help and heal, a hearing for the Gospel. The people of the place were a decadent race, spoiling with the vices of both the Chinese and Tibetans. The Tibetan origin of both people and ruler went back some five or six hundred years to a migration from Central Tibet, but whatever hardihood and virility they had once possessed had been largely lost, and the great fortress-like buildings that were so imposing, housed a failing race. Both town and lamasery festered with every kind of sin, and as the dark facts seeped out in rumor, quarreling, murder, and suicide, it seemed to the missionaries that the doom of the cities of the plain must soon fall on Chone.

Yet the religionists of the lamasery, when they visited in the carefully appointed Tibetan guest room of the mission house, argued with arrogance and pride the abstractions of a Buddhist salvation or the intricacies of esoteric religion. Finally won to a grudging admiration of a life whose integrity they could neither deny nor exemplify, much of their opposition and argu-

ing ceased but the tyranny of sin-sodden lives and perverted thinking sealed them against the truth.

Both Akku Seng-ge and Akku Tan-dzen bore valiant witness to the Tibetans of the place, and some from among the Chinese and half-Tibetans of the town and district accepted Christ. But mostly as elsewhere along the border, the line of language and race was also the line between acceptance and rejection of the truth.

As the work went on and one by one the Tibetan villages of the tributary streams of the Tao River were reached, the question came up about the region beyond the Min Shan. Then, too, the many contacts made in the mission guest room and among the crowds that came to the great religious festivals in the square of the lamasery, placed upon the missionaries a burden of prayer and interest for the wild Te-bus of unsavoury reputation who lived in the inaccessible region of gorges and canyons between the two great barrier ranges. Headmen from the Te-bu villages came to Chone on official business, pilgrims came for blessing seeking amelioration of their woes at the lamasery, and all along the farthest foothills of the mountains are scattered their many cattle camps. Thus it was but natural that missionaries who had gained something of this vision and burden in Chone, were the ones who finally took up residence in the community of Drag-sgam-na beyond the mountains.

During the ten years before 1929, a number of visits had been made to that place, but in the spring of that year a missionary family driven both by the desire to take up work among the Te-bus, and by the threatening conditions resulting from the Moslem rebellion, rented part of a Tibetan home and moved into one of

the villages of Drag-sgam-na. It was the first attempt to establish a foothold in Tibetan country by taking up residence in a village rather than in a trading post. And as such they needed all of wisdom and grace, patience and firmness, strangely mixed in varying proportions for each and every occasion, to live down suspicion and win the friendship of the unruly Tibetans.

Crossing over the thirteen thousand foot pass of the Min Shan and down through gorges of breath-taking and awesome grandeur, took them away from any real or fancied protection as was operative along the border, where as those who had passport rights they needed to seek no man's special favor. But among the independent and forthright people of Drag-sgam-na no such rights were recognized, and the missionaries stayed on by reason of general good will and the special interest and protection of their host. The entire difficult problem was greatly simplified, and the missionaries received much really essential aid from the Chinese Christians of Taochow Old City who operate in the region as traders. They placed all their trade connections, years of experience, and all the local good will they were able to enlist at the call of the missionaries.

Chief of these Christian traders was Su-ta, whose word was practically law among many of the Te-bu, for he had traded and traveled in the region for years. By opening Tibetan country to the Gospel he felt that he was really having a share in passing on the Good News to others, and so did everything he could to make suitable arrangements. Thus even in this indirect way early missionary work in Taochow Old City that had brought salvation to the Chinese, now through those Chinese Christians contributed to the fulfillment of

the original vision of pushing into Tibetan country with God's truth.

Drag-sgam-na or Stone Box as the name indicates by all the facts of terrain and location is a place of storied security. The community of five villages and a small lamasery are distributed at the foot of the great encircling cliffs, for Tibetan country is peaceful. Only fights among themselves can disturb the community. Although, of course, those take place giving the missionary abundant opportunity for first-aid work, yet Drag-sgam-na on the whole is an orderly community and because of both wealth and security the people are only infrequently involved in robbing and raiding. As a matter of record, they had no part in the Te-bu raid on Luba Si.

Yet by very reason of this geographic and communal aloofness, the missionaries, who lived in Drag-sgam-na for about two years, felt that another place down in the main valley was the true center from which to evangelize Te-bu land. Denga is down among the fortified villages and the center of a trade that extends down into the lower Te-bu gorges, and to the fighting clans of Tag-ra Valley. Upstream it is but a short distance to Tsong-ru and Za-ru, Te-bu tribes that are the most turbulent of all and are not under the Chone Prince. There are two lamaseries in Denga, and in a village near the lower lamasery the missionaries again for two years made their home in the rented half of a Tibetan house. The folk of Denga are far different from those of Drag-sgam-na. Bitter interclan and intervillage feuds rage all around. And the landlord was a typical Te-bu—surly, morose, violent, and unpredictable. It required all the grace of God's supply and all the knowledge of Tibetan character and custom gained

by the Drag-sgam-na experience to win through in the Denga region. Yet finally a building site was purchased and in spite of difficulties of many kinds a fine mission compound put up.

Life in Denga was not without incident. The fortified villages of the unruly people who had purposed clearing out the foreigners in the Luba raid were not far away. All through the region there seemed to be a peculiar sullen enmity against the foreigners. Again and again there were ugly threats. An armed attempt to drive off the missionaries' horses was made, and attempts were made to burn the house while it was in process of construction. Finally a darkly conceived and cleverly executed threat of a raid, some fierce attack after dark, was in the air for months bringing much uncertainty and strain. Though by kindness and the doing of much first-aid work the missionaries had won many friends yet Te-bu country is a land of alarms and violence.

Ill health necessitated an early furlough, and while the missionaries were away the malcontents raided and burned the mission station of Denga. No settlement of any sort has been made about that affair and until some settlement of apology and indemnity, if not of punishment, has been made it is impossible to reoccupy Denga. So again the valley beyond the Min Shan cannot be included within the occupied field of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission. Yet as a hostage of hope, pointing to future victories for the Gospel, A-tang, the old friend and host of Drag-sgam-na, out of much sorrow and trouble, has come to the Lord opening his heart to the Gospel even as he had formerly opened his home to the missionaries.

In the meantime, Chone the town of great Tibetan

houses, had been destroyed. So, too, the lamasery for all of its might and arrogance, had been reduced to ruins along with the printing house and the printing blocks of the Buddhist Scriptures. After years of absence missionaries came back to live and work among the people of Chone as they slowly rebuilt their homes. Among the near-by Tibetan folk there is a new moving toward the Gospel, for much of past religious solidarity has gone with the vanishing glories of the past.

Even the political future of Chone is no longer certain, for the Chone Prince has been murdered and throughout the entire region of his one-time rule is turmoil and uncertainty. In the midst of that very uncertainty the missionaries can only be certain of this, that as God in the past has overruled making every outbreak to result in the furtherance of the Gospel, so now they wait until the road across the mountains into Te-bu land is again open for the messengers of Christ. For the people who sit in gross darkness must hear about the breaking of a great light. But for A-tang in Drag-sgam-na that light has already broken.

Chapter III

THE greatest lamasery of all northeast Tibet fills the valley floor from the river's edge to the foot of the barren mountains which rim the course of the stream. Row upon row of neat white-washed buildings mark the cloisters of the three thousand five hundred bonzes of Labrang. Above the regular line of flat-topped roofs, the imposing outlines of chanting halls and idol houses mark the shrines of their worship, temples housing colossal idols of Buddha, or filled with ranks of lesser images placed tier on tier and row on row in the inner gloom that is only lighted by the flickering butter lamps which the humbly bowed worshipers have lit as an offering. They come seeking comfort, healing, and merit, and the whisper of their hopeless prayers echoes in that unheeding gloom.

The chanting halls are ranged about the square, where at festival seasons the "devil dances" or religious miracle plays are performed that the worshipers may thrill to pageantry and forget the unanswering darkness of their shrines. There they may see sin and the curse overcome in visualized symbolism, and may fire their rifles and yell themselves hoarse in celebration of the ancient fallacy that man, by enlisting magical powers, may overcome his fallen nature and win release and salvation by deeds and effort. At such and other scheduled times, the chanting halls are filled for hours with bonzes as with ancient complicated ritual, featuring bells and incense, rosaries and mystic passes, they intone the jargon of the Tantric incantations so so that the deluded worshipers, hearing the solemn hum of prayer and formula filling the gloomy banner-

hung aisles of the chanting halls, may feel in some ill-explained way that atonement is being made for their sins, and that power is being released from the third entity of the Buddhist trinity—The Sacred Writings—to help them along the unending cycle of progressive salvation.

The fringes of the lamasery are bounded by the "circle"—that path that the pilgrims have made on foot or by successive prostrations as they follow the clockwise circuit of merit. Along that path the long rows or prayer-wheels—the turning cylinders of mechanical praying—with projecting handles that the pilgrims may seize and turn, promise multiplied efficiency in piling up a credit of hopeless appeals for nothing to nobody that "prayers may be wafted to the extinct Buddha who is *not* in the eternal *nowhere*."

As the lamasery is the visible center of Tibetan religious aspiration, so the bonzes or monks of the Tibetan monastic orders are the active human factor in the equation of Tibetan worship. They direct the people, they perform the necessary rites, and with habitual arrogance they claim the material rewards of their efforts until most of the wealth of the land is concentrated in their hands. Above the monks are the lamas or Living Buddhas who wear the sacred yellow as the symbol of their high position, for they are the multiple saviours of Tibet—incarnations of the emanations, attributes, and manifestations of Buddha. Saviour is the word used in address by the people who worship them indeed as gods. In reality, with few exceptions, they are filthy, avaricious, and licentious men, many of them outrageously and frankly immoral. Yet however obvious their sinfulness, to the Tibetans they are holy—sacrosanct. With amazing casuistry even the facts

of conduct are challenged by invoking the sophistries of the ideal versus the real and saying that the facts which appear may be only illusions, the result of imperfect comprehension.

In this we see some of the aspects of why Buddhism has such a hold on the minds and hearts of the people. For the uncouth soul easily dazzled by glamor and show, it offers pageants and drama, buffoonery and high ritual; for the earnest, conscientious soul it offers painstaking performance of works and soul-satisfying sacrifice and effort; for those who lack utterance it supplies magical, dimly-apprehended formulæ—the very essence of religion put into the mouths of men; and to the scholarly one it offers all the delights of philosophical hair-splitting and the sophistry of basic agnosticism. Through it all runs the comprehensive adoration of images, shrines, books, and men, whereby men wrongly discharge the debt which burdens their souls; a debt which should be paid in worship and adoration to God alone. For worship is, after all, the most fundamental of all man's impulses—the longing of the inbreathed spirit of life turned homeward.

Yet Labrang is more than the greatest visible symbol in the building and organization of lamaism in northeast Tibet. It is an effective and despotic power of rule controlling not only the worship but the actions and livelihood of thousands. The land of the entire district is in reality held as a possession of the lamasery, the laws of equity are administered by it, and in all things it has well-nigh absolute power over the people of the district.

Some hundreds of yards down stream from the precincts of the lamasery are the closely huddled buildings of the trading village. In its arrangement there is no

fine assurance of position, but the inns, traders' establishments, and traders' dwellings are crowded together in the midst of refuse heaps of indescribable odors. It is as though they were apologetic of their very existence and were only there on trial. Indeed so it once was, but with the steady pressure of growing trade, and the lessening of the power and arrogance of the lamasery under Moslem and Chinese aggression, the trading post or *tawa* has secured and maintained definite rights as a part of Labrang. Still further downstream is the compact fort of Labrang, once garrisoned by Moslem troops, and still the seat of official Chinese rule and administration.

Across the stream from the *tawa* is the mission station, somewhat by itself, under the southern wall of the valley. It was during the time when Moslem troops were garrisoned in Labrang that missionary occupation in 1919 was finally made possible. During the years that followed, the missionaries so won the hearts of the Tibetans that when the Tibetans rebelled against the Moslems, although fighting lasted in Labrang for months, they were protected by all even when in the line of fire between skirmishing parties. After the Moslem victory they were able to mitigate the sufferings of the Tibetans, and finally when control of the region was shifted from Moslems to Chinese and the Tibetans regained virtual control, the position of the missionaries was one of universal respect and great influence.

A large portion of the trade of northeast Tibet flows through Labrang, later to reach world markets on the Chinese coast. The religious interest of the land turns toward the great Living Buddha of Labrang—the highest incarnation in all the region, and who now that both

the Dalai and the Panchen lamas are dead, is very nearly the highest in all Tibet. Here for almost twenty years the mission station of Labrang has stood representing an untiring witness to the truth. In the lamasery market place where the two pioneers were stoned, the Gospel has been preached hundreds of times to all who would hear. And though the monks have scrowled and threatened, people who had come from all over northeast Tibet to trade and worship have stopped to listen to the story of salvation by grace—a salvation that is not a matter of laboriously acquired merit through the saying of prayers, turning of prayer wheels, or marking the path of merit by repeated prostrations around the lamasery. And then they have gone back to far and as yet forbidden places with the printed Word in their hands, and the echo of the matchless name of Jesus in stumbling questionings upon their lips.

The guest room of the mission station is a well-appointed place for entertaining all who come. Sometimes the monks come just to argue and debate, sometimes a wounded man is brought in for treatment, sometimes the entire compound is full of guests from Shame, Lhamo, Tatzen, and other far-away places, and in the guest room they hear the missionary tell of God's truth. And sometimes the highest officials of Labrang—the Tibetan commander, Ah-lo, who is brother to the Buddha, or even the big Buddha himself, come to visit. There in secret parley the great Living Buddha, reading from a well-thumbed testament, has discussed the one true way of salvation that is so far above the circuitous meanderings of the sixty-eight ways of the lamas' creed. And in that guest room have sat chiefs and princes of Golok and other tribes who, responding to that gracious welcome, have by invita-

tion, opened a way to untouched regions. But most significant of all in that guest room, Tibetans of lama-ridden Labrang have made secret confession of faith and have tested and proved the power of prayer to bring God's gift of health to sick bodies. So though there is as yet no religious toleration or open confession in Labrang, the Gospel is finding receptive soil in trouble-wearied, sin-sick souls. The spade work and seeding of a glorious harvest is being done in the witnessing of guest room and market place or as the missionaries travel to reach the homes and tents of that great district.

Legs-bshad-rgya-mtso, the Tibetan in whose heart God has worked so marvelously in turning his soul from all the superstitions of the past and follies of the present to a deep abiding reception of the truth, was once a monk in Labrang lamasery; and it was there he first heard of Jesus and read the Word of His truth. So in secret faith and open confession the signs of victory are to be seen even in Labrang, the religious center of northeast Tibet.

Chapter IV

HALFWAY between Taochow Old City and Labrang is the large lamasery and trading post of Hehtso. It, too, had been visited by the pioneers, but the bigotry of the monks and the hostility of the people of the district prevented any occupation until about the time Labrang was opened. The routine of entrance was much the same as in Labrang and Rong-wu. First a small house was rented in the Chinese enclosure, as the trading village was called, then after a number of years of uncertainty and delay land was secured from the lamasery authorities on which the compound was built.

The lamasery, though large, does not have the peculiar, wide-reaching influence of Labrang, so in a sense the work in the Hehtso district has a more local significance than in Labrang, though the district in extent and population is much larger. The entire district, with the exception of a portion of grassland plateau toward Taochow and eastward to the Peh Ling on which there is a sprinkling of nomads, is a region of villages, and is typical of the upper farming country of the Tibetans—the highest farms before one comes to the true Tibetan steppe that is too high for the growing of any crops.

The villages which are located in sheltered hollows or near springs and streams are of the pueblo type, with flat roofs that form a sort of communal assembly ground. Access from one house to another is as much on removable ladders of notched logs as by the ground floor entrances. Each village is a closely-knit social unit, carrying on much of its activity by collective ef-

fort, and holding grazing lands and forests in common, though the fields are owned privately. Partly because of their quarrelsome, trouble-making disposition, and partly because of their community loyalty, feuds between villages are frequent and of considerable severity, raids and surprise attacks often disturbing the peace.

In the entire district of Hehtso there are said to be some seven hundred villages, and the problem of missionary work in the district is one of securing and utilizing openings into these village communities. Much of it is done on the "give and take" basis of hospitality. Three times a month the people of the district gather at the big market fair, the *tsong-ra,* to buy and sell. Merchants from Chinese country plan to reach that fair each time it is held, and so, too, the missionaries with books and tracts and sounding trumpet attend. Always there is a crowd to hear the Gospel. The red-robed bonzes may bicker and argue, and the sorcerers may pass by in sullen disdain, but the common people —women who have sold the backloads of straw or fuel they have brought and are still wondering what sort of needles are the best, or what thread is the most durable, and men who have finished their trading or are still waiting for a better price for whatever they sell—gather around to listen as God's way of salvation is told in Tibetan that Tibetans may learn to know His grace.

At fair times old friends make the mission compound their headquarters and bring companions who become new friends, all pausing over a bowl of buttery tea and *tsamba* (parched barley flour) to tell and hear the latest news, for every Tibetan, lacking newspapers and radio, is an inquiring reporter gathering and retail-

ing the news of the day. So to such the Good News is told.

Playing host is pleasant and comfortable, but to be effective as a host the missionary must also be diligent as a guest, when his horse takes the dusty trail in winter's cold or splashes through summer's driving rain as he goes to visit in the dark and dingy homes of his friends. There, too, as he eats meat of more than doubtful freshness and drinks tea flavored with butter of great and enduring strength, he again can talk the Gospel to all of the family, even to the old folks who never get to Hehtso or gather at the market fair. And through the hours of the day the inhabitants of the village gather on the flat roofs to hear and talk of some new thing.

In the history of the Mission, Hehtso not only is representative of the villages of the district but is linked with and representative of the work among the farmers, or *rong-wa,* of the upper farming country throughout the districts of Bo-ra, Ah-mchok, Sa-mtsa-rong, Shes-tsang, and Mei-shu. Down toward Chinese country there are also places such as Ja-mu-ghun, Shes-ra-tsa-mdo, and Shen-trug that can be well worked from Hehtso. Though separate in organization and allegiance these peoples are all much alike. In their own hard-bitten way they have escaped some of the racial decay of the Chone River Tibetans, but are a surly, suspicious, and troublesome people. Quite frankly admitting that they are only farmers, and according to the Tibetan way of thinking, in a class which is inferior to the nomads who live, so the nomads say, the ideal life, they seem to specialize in large-size pettiness and some, such as those of Ah-mchok, have acquired an unenviable reputation as thieves and robbers.

TITAO CONFERENCE GROUP

Top Row, left to right: Mr. Harrison, Mr. Notson, Mrs. Notson, Miss Lindstrom, Mrs. Mosely; middle row, Mr. Fred Ruhl, Mrs. Harrison and Bobby, Mr. Snyder, Mrs. Derk, Mr. Ruhl, Mr. Derk, Mr. Mosely; bottom row, David Derk, Mrs. Snyder, Mrs. Ruhl, Miss Haupberg, Doris Derk.

MINCHOW CONFERENCE GROUP

Left to right, standing: Mr. Ruhl, Mr. Derk, Mr. Griebenow, Mr. Snyder, Mr. Harrison, Mrs. Ekvall, Mr. Ekvall, Mrs. Fesmire, Mr. Fesmire, Mr. Mosely, Mr. Carlson. Sitting: Mrs. Derk, Mrs. Griebenow, Mrs. Harrison, Mrs. Ruhl, Mrs. Snyder, Miss Haupberg, and Mrs. Mosely. Miss Birrel and Mrs. Carlson are seated in front.

Missionary itineration has sketchily touched some of this territory. But at two different times missionaries feeling their way into Tibetan territory lived in Samtsa-rong. There in the little village of Ga-ding-go they lived through the petty annoyances and major crises of life in a community filled with all the intrigues, jealousies, and ill will of Tibetan village life, finally by patience and love winning a place in the confidence and regard of the people. Yet the village of Ga-ding-go, and those others which have been visited, are only a few of the many that are to be reached, as year by year the missionaries go the steadily lengthening rounds to wherever they may find friends to make a way of approach.

As in Labrang and in other of the more recently opened Tibetan stations, there has, as yet, been hardly any visible response to the Gospel among the people of this region. At the Hetso trading post Chinese have been converted and a promising work begun among those people, but the scattered individuals among the Tibetans who have professed interest and faith have done so secretly, none daring to break with the communal worship and take his stand openly. Years ago one man did make open confession and a short time later he was killed by his fellow villagers. According to Tibetan custom the affair was settled and life money eventually paid to the widow, so the matter was ended. When a village decides on such a course of action the life money is easily raised, and the deed being done it is paid for, there being no further redress.

The lamaseries of the district are only indirectly involved, for the village as a unit is all-powerful in its own affairs. For the one or two who secretly confess the name of the Lord the dark future prospect has

until now sealed their lips. Thus for long years the disheartening work of seed-sowing has been prolonged, and only in greater opportunity and greater receptiveness and interest is there any visible progress. The time of sowing is long, but year by year, month by month and trip by trip, the work is being done.

Chapter V

RONG-WU was the third station opened in the new line of advance into Tibetan country that took place about the year 1920. First Pao-an was occupied, and within a surprisingly short time several score of Chinese from among the townspeople turned to the Lord. The place had been opened primarily as a step into Tibetan country following in the footsteps of the early pioneers. Yet there were no Tibetans in the strictly Chinese population of the one-time garrison town, but there were throughout the district—first the hundreds of villages of Reb-kong, and then further west the nomads. Final occupation was extended to the lamasery of Rong-wu, where property was secured and a mission compound established.

The very brightest prospects attended the beginning of the work in the Reb-kong district. Though the people are fanatical and troublesome, fighting one another or outsiders with equal readiness, yet there is a comparatively high degree of literacy in the district, and the printed page has a special effectiveness. Then, too, the head sorcerer of all the sorcerer sect—Ah-lags Gur-ring-tsang—was from the start amazingly predisposed to regard with favor not only the missionaries, but the Gospel they preached. Time and again, his utterance seemed to indicate if not final personal belief in Christ, at least a clearly worded perception of the supreme claims and position of the Lord and of the essential truth of the Gospel. His open-mindedness not only helped the missionaries to a position of high regard in public opinion, but his interest in the Gospel fostered the hope that he might be converted and so

open the doors of salvation to numbers of his own people and coreligionists.

Yet in the summer of 1936, this station and this great promising field was surrendered to another Mission, and Alliance missionary activity moved westward and southward seeking new and it might be harder fields. To understand the full significance of that change we must stop and learn something of the work and influence of William E. Simpson. Mr. Simpson was not an Alliance missionary, yet he was in a sense a child of the Mission and the son of one family of the earliest pioneers. By force of circumstance he was implicated in the competitive endeavor that brought division and distress to the Chinese field. Yet by calling and consecration his life was dedicated to taking the Gospel to the Tibetans. In pushing into Tibetan country, by learning the routine and technique of caravan travel and finding the key of friendship with which to unlock the door of opportunity among the farther tribes, he was a trail-blazer, and those who went to Labrang, Rong-wu, or along the Tao River to Shestsang and southward to Lhamo, were debtors to him in showing the way to live and travel among the Tibetans.

Every year his yak caravan started out from Labrang to lose contact with the outside world for months and to push ever farther among the untouched, unreached, and even unknown tribes of northeast Tibet. And each time he came back not only were there fewer white spots on the map, but less of uncertainty and more of detailed knowledge of the great task that was yet ahead for all of the Tibetan missionaries. So in that partnership mutual confidence grew, until to clear away the possibility of doing anything at cross pur-

poses, or through strife and emulation, and to cement the deepest fellowship between the Alliance and Mr. Simpson and the devoted Swedish missionaries who had come to join him, an agreement of comity and division of field and labor was made. As one of the conditions, among others, of the agreement, the Alliance gave up the work in Pao-an and Rong-wu, turning its attention more toward the southwestern portion of the field. Since that time those who have come after him have accepted the agreement as the very best expression of inter-Mission coöperation, and it remains to this day as a bond in fellowship and labor.

But the one who pioneered in far places and helped so much in establishing the tradition of itineration ever farther into Tibetan country is no longer with us, for he was taken suddenly by a volley of rifle fire from a bandit ambushment in Chinese country. He had sometimes wondered whether such a fate might not find him on the high plateau as he traveled among the fiercely warlike and constantly raiding Tibetans. But by a strange irony, because of mistaken identity, he was killed by Moslem bandits as he traveled the Big Road that leads from Sian to Lanchow. By example and advice he gave much to Alliance missionary effort among the Tibetans and for them he gave his life. We give his memory the same fond remembrance we give the memory of our own, for he lies with them in the mission graveyard at Luba Si.

Immediately following the making of that agreement and the giving up of Pao-an with all its historic significance and rich promise, Alliance missionary effort moved boldly beyond the border from Taochow Old City. Indeed even before that time a special exploratory trip undertaken in 1923 had revealed some

of the possibilities of the field which extended westward and southward from that point. The party traveled for a month in a great arc into Tibetan country, finding dozens of tribes never before reached with the truth, as they passed through that bleak land, alternately scorched by burning sun and for days soaked by the cold sleety rain of high altitudes. They also found something of the hardship and danger that new advance would entail, for the problem of residence in the land, and the establishment of bases was not at all clear, and only one thing was sure—there was work to be done.

After the return to the field in 1927, those who in the interest of the common good had surrendered their station of Rong-wu had an important and leading part in all the opening of new work. It was not possible to go on to Sung-p'an and establish a new base south of Taochow Old City, but they participated in the occupation of Samtsa Rong and traveled far among the nomad peoples of the upper Tao River basin seeking a new base for that work until the Lord called home that most gifted and earnest of all the Tibetan workers, and his fellows were left to mourn and wonder how and when his place was to be filled.

In all this strange and tragic circumstance the station of Pao-an-Rong-wu has had its part in Alliance history on the Kansu-Tibetan Border, calling us to prayer that others may be enabled to bring to fulfillment the early rich promise of that station, that true inter-Mission coöperation and fellowship may ever have a controlling influence in all the work along the Border, and that recruits may come to take up the work laid down by those who have gone before.

Chapter VI

ON THE Kansu-Tibetan Border field, Lhamo is the spearhead of missionary advance into Tibet, and is the only occupied point of the new line of advance projected in 1927. The nearest farming villages are almost a full day's ride from this lamasery center that lies beyond the western extremity of the Min Shan, well up on the twelve thousand rim of the Tibetan steppe. Great mountains rise above the grass country all around to overshadow the twin lamaseries that are set in an irregular red and white pattern among the folds of ancient glacial moraines. Between those mountains wide passes hold the trails that lead toward all four points of the compass and the land of the tent dwellers.

The pioneers heard about this place from the traders and for them it was an unknown goal lying beyond the southwestern horizon. Then a Living Buddha, who gratefully stayed in the guest quarters of Taochow Old City Mission station gave as his home Stag-tsang-lha-mo (Goddess of the Tiger's Den) and that contact forged a link in the chain of circumstances that was to bring the Gospel to that point in Tibetan country. Missionary occupation of Stag-tsang-lha-mo could not be a matter of arbitrary entrance, for the region acknowledged no Chinese domination; the local tribal and lamasery authorities were all powerful.

Up until 1929 a number of trips by different missionary parties had been made to this place of two lamaseries, and in the summer of that year, though at first rebuffed by the authorities of the larger lamasery, the missionaries, through the intervention of Tibetan

friends secured favorable consideration from the authorities of the other lamasery. After a year or more of negotiating, during which time they lived in Samtsa Rong, they were finally allowed to settle in one of the trading villages of Lhamo.

The people of Lhamo and the surrounding district are the most turbulent of all those peoples who live in the wild Tibetan country close to the Kansu-Tibetan marches. Three tribes and two lamaseries divide among themselves the control of the region, and in the jealousies and rivalries of that divided administration lawlessness thrives. The radius of a day's ride from Lhamo is a danger zone wherein there are more robberies than in any other area of its size in all northeast Tibet. Raiding parties and their pursuers ride through Lhamo itself, and battles have taken place across the little valley that lies between the two lamaseries.

The first months of missionary occupation were quite in harmony with this general atmosphere of insecurity and risk. After dark the yard and shack that called themselves a mission compound were stoned again and again, stones from the whirling slings of Tibetan bullies humming out of the dark like giant bumblebees. The nights are always full of alarms with the barking of dogs and gunfire, but during those first months it seemed every night as though some major disaster was about to break upon the village. Again and again attempts were made to fire the place and two horses were stolen. There even came a period when the threat of a raid gave an added sense of insecurity to the time after darkness had come and before the dawn had broken.

Yet the first difficult months were lived through and two years later a compound was made on land loaned

by the authorities. In that new compound with more adequate entertainment facilities the guest-room work prospered exceedingly. Compared to the hectic rush of summer activity the nomads have little routine work during the winter months, so their thoughts turn quite naturally to both religion and trade. The winter trails are wind-swept and the days are bitter cold, but through that arctic weather men, women, and children ride to Lhamo to sell and barter in leisurely fashion before the shop fronts in the trading villages, and to make the rounds of the shrines and idol houses of the lamaseries. But at night many of them—those who are friends of the missionaries or are friends of the friends of the missionaries—come to the mission compound to stay where there is shelter and some security behind high adobe walls. Then as the evening meal goes on, the guest room is filled with the excited hum of voices telling all the news of the land, until the hum is stilled by music and the rather music-loving Tibetans listen to "The Light of the World Is Jesus," "We Have Heard the Joyful Sound," "Bringing in the Sheaves," and other such hymns.

Shepherds, herders, traders, robbers, murderers, and braves; they sit in the circle their faces touched with a strange bewilderment, their lips moving as they follow phrases that have caught their fancy, and the rosaries and prayer wheels of their day-long religious observance forgotten as they hear of the Saviour. And it is as families that they have come. Only the women folk can pick out the right sort of thread, or the best size of needle, so they, too, sit and listen unhampered by the cares of the tent, for that is a day's ride away. There are many wonders to see and talk about in the foreigner's place, but the greatest wonder of all is the

wonder of a Gospel that with no subterfuge is self-proclaimed as the only true religion. The Chinese have their religion, the Moslems have their religion, the foreigners—. But no, it is not the foreigners' religion, it is the religion of heaven given for all and the only true way. So again and again in the guest room—when the circle is packed with a couple score of faces, or when a solitary arrival drinks his tea and talks with his host—the story is told of a heavenly guest room where entrance is only secured by first-hand, intimate acquaintance with the heavenly host.

Yet guest-room work is only half, or less than half, the story of work in this center where market preaching cannot be carried on and where formal services are attended only by a few. For even guest-room work will languish and dwindle if the missionaries do not regularly visit old friends, going from encampment to encampment to stay with those who came as guests to him the year before, and making new friends who will come to him the year following. Four months has been about the average of time spent each year visiting the tents, but the ideal would be about six months spent each year tenting among the tent-dwellers of the Tibetan grass lands.

Other fields may have bullock carts, bicycles, boats, or cars, but Tibet has the yak, for though the members of the party may ride on horseback, that uncertain animal or his hybrid brother is the transport animal of the land. The missionary yak caravan, scorched, soaked, or half frozen by turns, moves through fickle Tibetan weather across a country where danger is never very far away, and sometimes close upon the trail. Nor are raiders and robbers the only hazard. It is called a healthy land, yet the high altitude plays

odd tricks with heart and nerves. One Tibetan worker died of a strange disease barely known to science, and in the open country there are sloughs and hollows where anthrax infection lurks in the ground, or rises on the tips of the growing grass. But through it all, from tribe to tribe and encampment to encampment, the yak caravan goes on that this distant forgotten people may hear of the Shepherd who still seeks for the lost on mountains that are storm-swept and desolate.

Even in "safe" country where it is unnecessary to send a scout on ahead or make camp with semi-military precautions, progress of the yak caravan is a succession of mishaps or minor disasters. In mud holes or bogs the loads come off with discouraging regularity or are scattered by stampeding oxen upon the open steppe. The rain pours down upon the fire of the noonday halt, soaking the hungry watchers who wait in hope for the kettle to boil, as under the rhythmic urging of the bellows, blue flame leaps all too feebly from a cow-chip fire. But at the end of the ride the caravan comes to the circle of black tents, and somewhere within or on the rim of that circle the missionaries' tents are pitched, so that the Gospel may be told as the missionaries camp at the door of their host's tent.

In this region one must have a host whose power and good will protect and guard in a land where, beyond the workings of hospitality and self-defense there is no law. So always it is with relief that the encampment is sighted, though the savagery of the encampment dogs, the great Tibetan mastiffs, makes it seem that imaginery hazards have been exchanged for very real and immediate dangers. There the missionaries as a family in a community of families stay and enter into the life of the encampment and tribe as much as pos-

sible. There they meet all who come, and do much first-aid work for the pitiful suffering ones of the community, preaching and living Christ to those who never heard of the One who comes seeking entrance at the heart's door.

Itineration among the nomads is not only the approved and necessary method of working the Lhamo district, but in itself is a constantly renewed guarantee that always the limits of endeavor shall be pushed farther and farther afield. In one encampment a chief from another tribe invites to his tent door, and from there a trader leads the missionary caravan along a new and untried way, as the frontiers of the field are pushed beyond the western horizon. Thus when nomad work is being done the extent of the field is not a static quantity, but by inner compulsion, the inspiration of a constantly renewed vision, and all the forces of outward circumstance, the urge will be to the regions beyond.

What have been the results in this the farthest and most recent of the existent mission stations of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission? Like on all Tibetan stations very meagre as yet. In a village on the fringe of nomad country two or three young people who have made profession of faith. An old Tibetan among the tents—the man who made possible missionary residence in Lhamo—who says, wonderingly, wistfully, "You pray, and when God's light shines in my heart I will believe." A Tibetan woman, hiding her faith a close secret, not yet daring open confession. A young nomad who, though all the threats of the priesthood were held over his head, sings and prays, but as yet has not found full belief. And a Buddha, who, though he, too, is called saviour, studies in secret half believingly,

the record of the Saviour of the world. These are some of the signs that herald the coming of the dawn in nomad land.

One thing in a strange way promises well for the future of the Gospel in the Lhamo area. The tradition of lawlessness is so strong that even the lamaistic hierarchy can do little against the utter independence of the people. No such despotic rule is in force as at Labrang. In that intolerance of restraint and fierce individualism there may yet be an open path for those who, forsaking all the meanderings of the way of Buddha, the Enlightened One, would follow the Jesus way. And the missionaries have many friends. When the same ill-shaped raiders who destroyed the Denga station came to Lhamo hoping also to burn that mission station, the people of the place and the authorities intervened to save the home of the missionaries who at that time were far away.

Chapter VII

WESTWARD came the pioneers of early years to begin a work for God on the Kansu-Tibetan marches, and westward move the workers of today, for the Kansu-Tibetan Border field is unique in that it has no fixed western boundary. The final limits are always far away under the sinking sun. For those pioneers, Luba Si and the Tibetan villages outside of Taochow, marked the limits of planned endeavor. Then bit by bit that limit was pushed back and in the early twenties a new line of stations was made a reality, though there had been earlier knowledge leading toward the upper Tao River.

In the summer of 1923, with the first of the long journeys into Tibetan country, there came to the Mission first-hand knowledge of nomad country on the open steppe, as well as experience of travel in Te-bu land. Dragsgamna, Zaru, Lhamo, Samtsa, Tatzen, and Rajab, were no longer mere names, but places where tribes of Tibetans—farmers and tent-dwellers—lived. A short time later a trip to the region of the Southern Plain, and then on through Soktsong at the knee of the Yellow River to the kingdom of Ngawa still further enlarged the hopes and vision of the Mission. Under the stimulus of the greater knowledge that had come as a result of all these ventures into the unknown a new line of stations in Tibetan country was projected, and with the return of the missionaries to the field in 1928 it was proposed to open Shestsang, Lhamo, and Denga.

On account of the hostility of the leaders in the region, Shestsang was never opened. Denga has since

been rendered untenable—for how long no one knows. Out of that projected line only Lhamo remains as a station and a base. As knowledge of the methods of travel and the safeguards of the Tibetan trails was gained, missionary exploration was pushed into new territory. From Te-bu Valley exploration southward resulted in knowledge of the communities and tribes in Tag-ra and Chiu-chi. And from there on toward Sung pan, that had been denied the Alliance by another Mission but is yet unoccupied, there were other tribes whose existence became known to the Mission for the first time.

Still later, as itineration among the nomads was further extended from Lhamo, another trip to the kingdom of Ngawa resulted in the greatest opportunity of the decade, when the rulers of that large and flourishing principality invited the missionaries to come and open Ngawa as a mission station. Did that mark the western limits of the field of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission? It was about two weeks' travel from the line of what at Luba Si was the frontier for the pioneers, and yet from Ngawa Alliance missionaries first came in contact with a Golok tribe and heard of farther fields.

If Ngawa could have been occupied at that time not only did the principality itself with its easily reached people promise a fruitful field, but Ngawa truly was a gateway to Golok country. Only hindered from accepting a number of invitations to Golok tribes by lack of time, the missionaries turned back after having visited the one Golok tribe of Buwhuatsang. On the return trip they also came in contact with Jarong tribesmen of the polyglot aborigines tribes which oc-

cupy part of the indeterminate region of the Sino-Tibetan frontier.

Lack of reinforcements prevented acceptance of the Ngawa offer, and to this day the station which should be there has not yet been opened. Still more recently, taking advantage of the lama of Labrang's pilgrimage to Lhasa, and of his and Golok chieftains' urgent invitations, another missionary venture has penetrated far up into Golok country, finding everywhere friendliness and open doors. Those tribes range far westward to the edge of the uninhabited inner plateau of Tibet, the Jang-tang (cold plain). Is that distant region the western boundary of the Kansu-Tibetan Border field?

It may be, and yet in those distant regions the caravan trails lead onward toward Lhasa, the sacred city of Tibet. When the Pan-chen lama was on his way back to that citadel and shrine city of Buddhism, his secretary invited Alliance missionaries to visit in the forbidden city, and again more recently the pilgrim lama promised to arrange a welcome for his missionary friends. So it may yet be that Alliance missionary endeavor on the Kansu-Tibetan Border shall not find its western limit until the Gospel has been preached by Alliance missionaries in Lhasa itself, thereby fulfilling Dr. Simpson's early vision and the pioneers' earnest desire. And it may be thereby fulfilling our Lord's divine plan and purpose before He shall come back in clouds and great glory.

PART VI

ONE MORE PART

To make the whole there needs but one more part; one more link to complete the chain; one more stone to lock the waiting arch into a span of enduring strength, that God's purposes may march to final glorious fulfillment. This short part of the story of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission, though in loving remembrance somewhat concerned with the past, is yet more concerned with the part that you, oh reader, will have in the future of God's mighty working in that far-away border country that opens on the once-closed land of Tibet.

PART VI

ONE MORE PART

In Remembrance.

"And You—?"

Frank Baer (October 23, 1914)
Mrs. Frank Baer, *nee* Ruth Lindberg
(May 17, 1908)
William G. Colby (August 5, 1919)
David P. Ekvall (May 18, 1912)
Mrs. David P. Ekvall, *nee* Helen Galbraith
(June 5, 1933)
Effie Gregg (May 11, 1908)
Charles R. Koenigswald (July 15, 1934)
Jens P. Rommen (June 12, 1923)
William A. Shantz (October 1, 1936)

This is the Roll of Honor of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission. Some stepped through pain and suffering directly from the stress of battle on the field into the presence of the Lord; and some were serving on other fields, remembering always with love and prayer the work in which they once had a part; but all belong to us. Their memory is the seal of a deathless devotion. They are now a part of the cloud of witnesses watching the battle of today.

There are also some other names of those who ended their earthly labors under other auspices, yet they, too, have a part in our remembrance.

Mrs. V. G. Plymire, *nee* Grace Harkless
Ivan S. Kauffman
John MacGillivary
Mrs. W. W. Simpson, *nee* Otilia Ekvall
Miss L. Swenson

These all also had a part in the story of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission.

The most precious remembrance is for those who are yet nameless. For there were little children who were the dearest sacrifice of all; a gift made in blinding tears and bitter anguish by parents who withheld nought in obeying a loving Saviour's last command.

So they rest till Jesus comes, when they and their comrades who yet remain shall in triumph serve Him anew.

Chapter II

THIS chapter most of all is devoted to you, oh reader, for having read thus far you also have a part in the story of the Kansu-Tibetan Border Mission. The privilege of partnership is an integral part of the mystery of God's dealings with mankind. The miracle of God's great salvation is yet ministered by human hands; the wonder of His loving thought is voiced by human tongues; and the battle is fought by those who stay by the stuff as well as by those who march where danger calls.

Thus in all the difficulty, danger, and threatening disaster that has filled this history of the past there has been a mystic partnership of those whose sacrifice repaired the material losses, and whose secret wrestlings of intercession raised a shield of defense in danger's hour. Their prayers complemented the preached Word, so salvation dawned in once darkened hearts; their faith brought the answer of revival to bless the work, and the victory of a truly indigenous Church crowned it all, because they were faithful in those secret hours of burden bearing.

In the present the challenge yet remains. The indigenous Church is still a little flock prone to fear; Islam still cries to the one God rejecting the Son; and in the gates of far Tibet the battle for the souls of men has just begun. There have been losses and no recruits have gone out to fill the ranks. The establishment of new stations—Ngawa and Merge—awaits reinforcements and funds, and caravans must be bought and maintained that the Gospel may move on toward the heart of the land. But most of all the entrenched might

of lamaism, backed by forces of darkness and dominating all of Tibetan life, awaits the last battle.

From the past one lesson is crystal clear. Whenever advantage has been gained and victory impends, counter attacks of malignant intent fall darkly on the Mission. Along the new line of occupation new fields called for workers, and for Tibetans salvation began to break; but sudden death, disease, and violence turned back the missionary advance until new faithfulness in prayer should make a way to victory. Never has there been a gain on the Kansu-Tibetan Border that was not won by hours of agonizing prayer.

Tibet, where every breeze is freighted with the voiceless supplication of flapping prayer flags, where streams and rivers turn the mills of prayer, where prayer wheels spin by pilgrim effort, and where the mutter of an endless petition punctuates all of human activity—Tibet, the citadel of evil and the land of false prayer, will only yield as we—missionaries, and readers of this urgent cry—learn truly to pray. Soldier of Christ pray on!

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